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LA POLITIQUE ÉTRANGÈRE BRITANNIQUE EN AFRIQUE DEPUIS 1957 : ACTEURS, PRINCIPES, PRATIQUES

Responsables du numéro :

Mélanie TORRENT & Michael PARSONS

Directrice de la publication : Pauline SCHNAPPER

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Couverture: Steeve Roucaute et Martine Monacelli

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Introduction[1]

Mélanie Torrent
Université Paris Diderot

'[A]ll that Africans ask for is that their strengths and weaknesses should be viewed and interpreted with the same degree of realism and understanding as it is applied to other peoples and regions of the world.'
Chief Emeka Anyaoku, ancien ministre des affaires étrangères du Nigeria et Secrétaire général du Commonwealth, 'Opinions', Channel Four Television, Londres, 9 avril 1992

'The state of Africa is a scar on the conscience of the world, but if the world focused on it – we could heal it.'
Tony Blair, Premier ministre britannique, conférence annuelle du parti travailliste, Brighton, 2 octobre 2001

'So from our own experience, and from our partnership with African countries over the past 50 years, we draw one crucial conclusion: that the EU must put the African people at the heart of its policy in Africa.'
Dr Nicholas Westcott, directeur du département Afrique, Service Européen pour l'Action Extérieure, Fondation universitaire, Bruxelles, 18 octobre 2011

En mars 1957, le Ghana de Kwame Nkrumah devient le premier pays d'Afrique sub-saharienne à célébrer son indépendance, lors de cérémonies qui rassemblent un public politique et diplomatique aussi divers qu'influent, et hautement conscient de l'importance des luttes de pouvoir nationales et internationales qui se jouent alors sur la scène africaine. Quelques mois après l'échec cuisant de l'expédition de Suez qui a conforté la domination américaine, ravivé la défiance française et dynamisé le radicalisme égyptien, l'indépendance du Ghana promet de modifier profondément les enjeux de la politique étrangère et d'influencer les pratiques diplomatiques dans une Afrique qui est tout à la fois

[1] Certains des articles de ce numéro ont fait l'objet d'une première présentation lors d'une journée d'étude organisée à l'Université Paris-Diderot le 25 mars 2011, grâce aux contributions du Laboratoire de Recherches sur les Cultures Anglophones (LARCA – EA 4214) et de l'Institut de Recherche en Afrique (IFRA) Nigeria, que je tiens ici à remercier.

espaces, objets et acteurs des relations internationales. Pour les décideurs britanniques, la politique étrangère en Afrique se pense alors selon deux grands enjeux, le nationalisme anticolonial et la Guerre froide, sur fonds d'intérêts économiques. L'influence politique, économique, militaire et culturelle de la Grande-Bretagne sur le continent repose sur sa capacité à maintenir une alliance efficace avec ses partenaires du bloc occidental, qui comprend alors les grandes puissances coloniales européennes et l'Afrique du Sud, sans pour autant hypothéquer ses relations avec les pays de l'Afrique indépendante. La transition post-coloniale est ainsi au cœur de l'élaboration de la politique étrangère et de la diplomatie britanniques en Afrique où, plus que dans aucune autre région du monde, les autres fins d'empires coloniaux européens, leurs héritages nationaux et leurs conséquences internationales ont eu une influence considérable sur les objectifs, moyens et résultats des politiques internationales des décideurs britanniques.

L'Afrique est avant tout plurielle et multiple, et dans les débats des années 1950 et 1960, les administrateurs de Whitehall ne l'envisagent que très rarement comme un bloc continental à l'égard duquel une politique globale pourrait s'appliquer. C'est à la fois l'Afrique des indépendances et l'Afrique des empires persistants, notamment en Afrique australe où la Rhodésie du Sud, l'Afrique du Sud et les colonies portugaises dominent une large partie des débats. La présence de colons européens, ou de communautés du sous-continent indien, dans ces territoires – au Kenya, en Ouganda ou en Afrique du Sud – influencent également les représentations britanniques de l'Afrique. Au sein du continent, c'est l'Afrique du Sud qui, de fait, se distingue comme le premier partenaire économique et militaire de la Grande-Bretagne. Mais l'Afrique, c'est aussi l'Afrique du Commonwealth, que le régime sud-africain quitte en 1961 et qui entre dans une phase d'expansion importante, ses membres africains passant de deux en 1957 à onze en 1968. Le Commonwealth lui-même, par les relations diplomatiques privilégiées qu'il cultive[2], constitue un cercle particulier, différent de l'Afrique « étrangère », où la Grande-Bretagne laisse souvent la priorité à ses partenaires occidentaux, à la France en particulier. L'Afrique, ainsi, est au croisement de plusieurs multilatéralismes contradictoires. Les forces centrifuges générées par la fondation de l'Organisation de l'Unité Africaine (OUA) en 1963 sont simultanément inversées par les processus d'intégration régionale en Europe de l'Ouest. Les conventions d'association entre la Communauté Economique Européenne (CEE) et les territoires africains, du Traité de Rome en 1957 à la première Convention de Yaoundé en 1963 renforcent les barrières sensibles, financières, économiques et culturelles, entre les anciens territoires français et belges et les États africains du Commonwealth, alors que Londres reste en marge de la CEE.

Cette complexité, pourtant, a souvent été gommée dans les imaginaires collectifs en Grande-Bretagne au profit d'une Afrique unique, pays plutôt que continent, ou d'une Afrique complexe parce qu'elle est violente, et résisterait à une analyse rationnelle et à des politiques efficaces. En mai 2000, la couverture de l'hebdomadaire *The Economist* affichait un continent africain qualifié de « hopeless ». Sans espoir ou désespérante, l'image de l'Afrique ainsi véhiculée à

[2] Lorna LLOYD, *Diplomacy with a Difference: the Commonwealth Office of High Commissioner, 1880-2006*, Leiden : Martinus Nijhoff, 2007.

l'aube du 21ème siècle semblait renvoyer tout droit aux ténèbres conradiennes, aux conflits, maladies et terreurs d'un continent effrayant. Récemment, les conclusions d'une enquête menée par Oxfam en Grande-Bretagne en décembre 2012[3] démontraient combien le continent africain continue de susciter un mélange complexe de compassion et d'incompréhension, d'impuissance et de désintérêt, de paternalisme et de misérabilisme parmi la population britannique. Quand elle n'est pas confinée à un rôle de victime, assujettie à une pauvreté et une famine chroniques, l'Afrique est perçue comme une menace – économique, sécuritaire et migratoire (alors même que la majorité des migrations africaines ont lieu au sein même du continent). L'importance et la médiatisation des actions de l'ONU pour le rétablissement, le maintien et la consolidation de la paix sur le continent nourrissent ces impressions. Début 2013, huit des douze missions politiques du Bureau des affaires politiques de l'ONU étaient basées en Afrique[4], tandis que sept des quatorze missions de maintien de la paix y opéraient[5]. De même, le classement du *Fund for Peace* mettait des pays africains en tête des États défaillants ou faillis (*failed states*)[6] – les deux pays africains les mieux classés étant l'Île Maurice et les Seychelles, respectivement 147ème et 120ème sur un total de 177 États. En 2013, le comité de veille indépendant *Freedom House* estime que seuls onze pays africains sur quarante-huit peuvent être considérés comme des États libres.[7]

La surreprésentation des pays africains au bas de l'indice de développement humain (IDH) renforce également ces impressions : mis à part les Seychelles et l'Île Maurice, qui ont un IDH élevé, les pays africains sont surreprésentés dans les catégories moyenne et basse des classements IDH. En 2011, trente-quatre des quarante-six États présentant les IDH les plus bas sont africains – et représentent, de

[3] « Africa image harming aid effort, says charity Oxfam », BBC News, 26 décembre 2012.

[4] Bureau des Nations Unies au Burundi (BNUB), Bureau intégré des Nations Unies en Centrafrique (BINUCA), Bureau d'appui des Nations Unies pour la consolidation de la paix en République centrafricaine (BONUCA), Représentant spécial du Secrétaire général pour la région des Grands Lacs, Bureau intégré des Nations Unies pour la consolidation de la paix en Sierra Leone (BINUCSIL), Bureau politique des Nations Unies pour la Somalie (UNPOS), Bureau du Représentant spécial du Secrétaire général pour l'Afrique de l'Ouest (UNOWA).

[5] Mission des Nations Unies au Soudan du Sud (MINUSS), Force intérimaire de sécurité des Nations Unies pour Abyei (FISNUA), Mission de l'ONU pour la stabilisation en République démocratique du Congo (MONUSCO), Opération hybride Union africaine-ONU au Darfour (MINUAD), Opération de l'ONU en Côte d'Ivoire (ONUCI), Mission des l'ONU au Libéria (MINUL), Mission de l'ONU pour l'organisation d'un référendum au Sahara occidental (MINURSO). Il est important de noter que les pays africains fournissent près d'un tiers des effectifs utilisés pour les opérations de maintien de la paix de l'ONU (source : Contributors to UN Peacekeeping Operations, 30 November 2012)

[6] La Somalie et la République Démocratique du Congo, dans la catégorie la plus critique, sont suivies du Soudan, du Tchad et du Zimbabwe – l'Afghanistan arrivant en 6ème position.

[7] Freedom House, « Freedom in the World 2013: Democratic Breakthroughs in the Balance ». Les pays restants sont divisés en pays partiellement libres (dix-neuf) et non libres (dix-neuf). Par rapport au classement de 2012, trois pays sont passés dans la catégorie libre, le Lesotho, la Sierra Leone et le Sénégal ; mais le nombre total de pays non libres a augmenté également (Angola, Mali et Guinée Bissau).

fait, les quinze derniers pays de la liste, juste après l'Afghanistan[8]. L'Afrique occupait déjà une place centrale dans les activités du Ministry of Overseas Development, la brève structure mise en place par le Premier ministre Harold Wilson lors du retour du parti travailliste au pouvoir en 1964, avant qu'elle ne soit réintégrée au Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) en 1970. Créé en 1997 par le gouvernement de Tony Blair, le Department for International Development (DFID) a parfois été perçu comme un ministère de l'Afrique, en marge du FCO. De même, au sein du gouvernement de coalition, les discours sur l'Afrique, lorsqu'ils affirment souligner le dynamisme prometteur du continent, adoptent une approche essentiellement économique et commerciale des relations internationales, où l'Afrique est avant tout un vaste marché. En juillet 2011, David Cameron appelait à la constitution d'une zone de libre échange en Afrique[9], tandis qu'Andrew Mitchell, à la tête du DFID, affirmait que l'Afrique était « open for business » et représentait un potentiel d'investissements considérable[10]. « Votre croissance », insistait-il auprès de son auditoire à la London School of Business, « est notre croissance », à une époque où neuf des taux de croissance économique les plus élevés dans le monde sont enregistrés en Afrique,[11] et où Cameron lui-même tentait, lors de sa visite à Pretoria en compagnie de vingt-cinq hommes d'affaires britanniques, de négocier pour la Grande-Bretagne une part importante des échanges avec l'Afrique du Sud[12]. Le partenariat *politique*, de même que de réels échanges culturels, semblent ainsi occuper une place relativement secondaire dans les débats publics sur les affaires africaines en Grande-Bretagne.

Ce numéro de la *Revue Française de Civilisation Britannique* (RFCB) part d'un constat significatif: la politique étrangère britannique en Afrique a occupé une place relativement marginale dans les productions universitaires – et n'a très certainement jamais suscité la somme de travaux, individuels et collectifs, dont la politique africaine de la France a pu faire l'objet. Et pourtant, comme l'ont si bien argumenté David Styan et Paul Williams[13], la Grande-Bretagne a bien une politique africaine qui, pour être relativement marginale, n'en est pas moins fondamentale pour la compréhension du rôle de la Grande-Bretagne dans la communauté internationale et pour l'étude de la société britannique – des élites comme des populations – au regard des enjeux mondiaux. Le début des années 1990 a marqué

[8] Il s'agit, en ordre décroissant, des pays suivants: Zimbabwe, Ethiopie, Mali, Guinée Bissau, Erythrée, Guinée, République Centrafricaine, Sierra Leone, Burkina Faso, Liberia, Tchad, Mozambique, Burundi, Niger et République Démocratique du Congo.

[9] David CAMERON, The time has come for African free trade, *Business Day* [South Africa], in *The Guardian*, 18 juillet 2011.

[10] Andrew MITCHELL, Speech to the London School of Business, 11 juillet 2011.

[11] Mark LOWCOCK, « Prospects for Africa and the role of development assistance », Economic Policy Research Centre (EPRC) conference, Kampala, 5 December 2012. La croissance du commerce avec l'Afrique date surtout, comme le note Paul Williams, du milieu des années 1990 et concerne surtout les importations. Paul WILLIAMS, « Britain and Africa after the Cold War: Beyond Damage Limitation? » in Ian TAYLOR & Paul WILLIAMS (eds.), *Africa in International Politics. External Involvement on the Continent*, London, Routledge, 2004, p. 53.

[12] Nicholas Watt, « David Cameron joins the new Scramble for Africa – catching up with China », *The Guardian*, 18 juillet 2011.

[13] Paul WILLIAMS, « Britain and African after the Cold War », *op. cit.*, p. 42.

un tournant important, double, dans l'étude des relations de la Grande-Bretagne avec l'Afrique. Tout d'abord, l'ouverture des archives officielles a renouvelé l'étude des transferts de pouvoir en Afrique sub-saharienne[14], et soutenu les travaux sur la lutte contre la ségrégation raciale en Afrique australe, que la mobilisation d'organisations de la société civile comme l'Anti-Apartheid Movement ou le Movement for Colonial Freedom (Liberation après 1970) avait par ailleurs maintenu au cœur de l'actualité britannique. Deuxièmement, la fin de la Guerre froide, la chute de l'apartheid, les transitions démocratiques en Afrique, les guerres civiles au Liberia et en Sierra Leone ainsi que le génocide rwandais ont donné un nouvel élan aux recherches sur la prévention et la résolution des conflits, ainsi que sur les liens entre développement, démocratie et paix. En Grande-Bretagne même, l'arrivée au pouvoir du gouvernement néo-travailliste de Tony Blair a donné à la politique africaine une place, idéologique et politique, qu'elle n'avait pas encore. L'Afrique est alors devenue un des cas d'étude préférés de la réalité et des limites de la « dimension éthique » de la politique étrangère britannique, promise par Robin Cook en 1997, et de l'engagement de Tony Blair pour une « doctrine de la communauté internationale », lors de son célèbre discours de Chicago en 1999[15]. De même, les guerres en Afghanistan et en Iraq à la suite du 11 septembre 2001 ont ravivé les études sur les politiques britanniques en Afrique[16], à une époque où la médiatisation

[14] Voir, entre autres, John KENT, *The Internationalization of Colonialism. Britain, France and West Africa, 1939-1956*, Oxford : Oxford University Press, 1992 ; Alan JAMES, *Britain and the Congo Crisis, 1960-1963*, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996 ; Philip MURPHY, *Party Politics and Decolonization: the Conservative Party and British Colonial Policy in Tropical Africa, 1951-1964*, Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1995. Plus récemment, l'ouvrage de David ANDERSON (*Histories of the Hanged: Britain's dirty war in Kenya and the End of Empire*, London : Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2005) a profondément renouvelé l'interprétation de la décolonisation britannique et a eu un impact politique et culturel fort. En octobre 2012, la décision de la haute cour de justice britannique a reconnu le droit de trois Kenyans de poursuivre l'État britannique et demander réparation pour des crimes commis pendant la guerre contre la rébellion Mau Mau. Sur les changements récents liés à la gestion des archives, voir également l'intervention de Roger Wm. LOUIS, « Skeletons in Britannia's Closet? Reassessing British Documents on the End of Empire in the Light of the "Migrated Archives" », Peter Lyon Memorial Lecture, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, London, 2012, <www.sas.ac.uk/videos-and-podcasts/politics-development-human-rights/skeletons-britannia-s-closet-reassessing-briti> (consulté le 10 janvier 2013).

[15] Voir également le discours prononcé par Tony Blair à Sedgefield en 2004 : Tony Blair, Speech in Sedgefield, 5 mars 2004, <www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2004/mar/05/iraq.iraq> (consulté le 25 janvier 2013).

[16] Voir, entre autres, Rita ABRAHAMSEN & Paul WILLIAMS, « Ethics and Foreign Policy: the Antinomies of New Labour's "Third Way" in Sub-Saharan Africa », *Political Studies*, vol. 49, n° 2, 2001; Patrick CHABAL, « The Quest for Good Government and Development in Africa: is NEPAD the answer? », *International Affairs*, vol. 78, n° 3, 2002; François GAULME, « Le sursaut africain du New Labour: principes, promesses et résultats », *Afrique contemporaine*, n° 207, 2003/3 ; Richard LITTLE & Mark WICKHAM-JONES (eds.), *New Labour's Foreign Policy. A New Moral Crusade?* Manchester : Manchester University Press, 2000; Tom PORTEOUS, *Britain and Africa*. London : Zed Books, 2008; Ian TAYLOR & Paul WILLIAMS (eds.). *Africa in International Politics. External Involvement on the Continent*, London : Routledge, 2004; Zoe WARE, « Reassessing Labour's Relationship with Sub-Saharan Africa », *The Round Table: The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 95, n° 383, 2006 ; Nicholas J. WHEELER & Tim DUNNE, « Good International Citizenship: a Third Way for British foreign policy? », *International Affairs*, vol. 74, n° 4,

de l'engagement britannique pour l'Afrique – l'aide à la reconstruction de la Sierra Leone après l'intervention militaire de 2000, la mise en place d'une Commission pour l'Afrique en 2004 et l'initiative Make Poverty History[17] en 2005 – semblait destinée à occulter la *realpolitik* de Londres, faite de ventes d'armes en Sierra Leone ou en Somalie, du scandale Anglo-Leasing au Kenya et de compromissions avec un certain nombre de régimes peu démocratiques. En adoptant une approche historique et en accordant une place centrale aux multilatéralismes, ce numéro souligne combien les grilles de lecture géopolitiques et géoculturelles ont connu de profonds bouleversements. L'importance des multilatéralismes doit alors se comprendre à deux niveaux, comme un des cadres d'action de la politique étrangère britannique, et comme échelle d'analyse des enjeux diplomatiques, institutionnels et sociétaux, entre exigences locales et paramètres globaux.

Des réseaux diplomatiques en mutation : alliances, concurrences, échanges

Une des constantes du réseau diplomatique britannique en Afrique depuis 1957 est sa faible densité, laissant de vastes territoires sans présence britannique directe tandis que l'essentiel des effectifs est concentré autour de pays prioritaires, au premier rang desquels l'Afrique du Sud. À l'époque coloniale déjà, les postes consulaires britanniques, relativement peu nombreux, se situaient avant tout en Afrique du Nord et dans quelques rares villes clés, comme Dakar ou Lourenço Marques (l'actuelle Maputo au Mozambique). La série d'indépendances africaines qui a lieu en 1960 ne donne pas lieu à une extension massive de la représentation diplomatique en Afrique francophone, mais plutôt au système de l'accréditation multiple, comme c'est le cas au Sénégal, au Cameroun, en Guinée ou au Congo. Cela s'explique, certes, par la survie de sphères d'influence européennes au-delà des transferts de pouvoir, la Grande-Bretagne cultivant une présence dans les pays du Commonwealth et laissant essentiellement France et Belgique au premier plan des relations avec le reste du continent. Plus largement, toutefois, même l'Afrique du Commonwealth n'est pas une des voies royales des carrières diplomatiques britanniques, à l'exception peut-être de l'Afrique du Sud. De fait, les Britanniques en poste en Afrique après les indépendances ont très souvent vécu leur première expérience du continent dans le cadre de l'administration coloniale, renforçant davantage la conviction qu'une nomination en Afrique ressemble plus, pour reprendre les termes d'A.H.M. Kirk-Greene, à « a branch-line terminus than a mainline junction »[18]. Sous l'effet conjugué du prisme colonial et des impératifs de la construction nationale post-coloniale dans les nouveaux États, les compétences

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1998, et *Moral Britannia? Evaluating the Ethical Dimension in Labour's Foreign Policy*, London, Foreign Policy Centre, 2004; Paul WILLIAMS, « Who's Making UK Foreign Policy? », *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs)*, vol. 80, n° 5, 2004, et « La Grande-Bretagne de Tony Blair et l'Afrique », *Politique Africaine*, n° 94, juin 2004, ainsi que « Blair's Commission for Africa: Problems and Prospects for UK Policy », *The Political Quarterly*, vol. 76, n° 4, 2005.

[17] MAKE POVERTY HISTORY, *A Challenge to the British Prime Minister*, <www.makepovertyhistory.org>, 2005 (consulté le 20 janvier 2011).

[18] A. H. M. KIRK-GREENE, « Accredited to Africa: British diplomatic representation and African experience, c. 1960–95 », *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, vol. 11, n° 1, 2000, p. 93, p. 100.

linguistiques des diplomates sont avant tout guidées vers le français et le portugais, indispensables à l'accomplissement de leur mission, aux dépens d'un apprentissage des langues africaines – seuls six diplomates britanniques maîtrisaient réellement le Kiswahili en 1995[19]. En 2013, la Grande-Bretagne occupe le 8e rang en termes de représentation diplomatique en Afrique avec 27 ambassades et hauts commissariats[20], loin derrière les États-Unis (46), la Chine (45), la Russie (42), ses principaux voisins européens, la France (38) et l'Allemagne (34), et le Brésil (31). Parmi les pays africains, les deux géants sud-africain et nigérian sont également mieux représentés que la Grande-Bretagne, avec respectivement 37 et 34 ambassades et hauts-commissariats, tandis que l'extension de « micro-postes », ne comprenant pas plus de deux diplomates, pourrait devenir plus courante et la mise en place des missions du Service Européen de l'Action Extérieure redistribuer en partie la carte diplomatique en Afrique[21]. Les redéploiements diplomatiques récents sont, dans ce contexte, particulièrement significatifs, comme le souligne une lecture croisée des contributions de Dean White et de Tony Chafer et Gordon Cumming. Actuellement au cœur de la politique africaine britannique pour des raisons économiques et sécuritaires, la région des Grands Lacs fut longtemps marginale, comme en atteste le profond déficit de relations diplomatiques, renseignements stratégiques et intérêts politiques manifesté par le gouvernement britannique au plus fort du génocide rwandais, en 1994. Si deux ambassades supplémentaires ont vu le jour en Afrique depuis 2002, à Conakry (Guinée) et à Asmara (Erythrée), un nombre plus important de postes a été fermé – dont les hauts-commissariats au Lesotho et au Swaziland et l'ambassade du Mali. La réouverture après huit années de l'ambassade de Madagascar, prévue pour mars 2013, doit être relativisée au regard de l'expansion bien plus dynamique, et à plus grande échelle, du réseau diplomatique en Asie.

Dans ce contexte, l'élaboration de diplomaties parallèles, ou d'une diplomatie décentralisée, pour reprendre les termes de Kelley, a pris une importance grandissante. Secteur privé, ONGs, célébrités, leaders religieux et intelligentsia sont autant d'acteurs clés pour la conduite comme pour l'analyse de la politique étrangère[22]. L'exemple du Nigeria qui, avec 167 millions d'habitants, dont 60 millions ont entre 18 et 35 ans, représente un des pôles diplomatiques africains majeurs, est significatif. Au niveau institutionnel, les groupes parlementaires, à l'image du All-Party Parliamentary Group on Nigeria (APPGN)[23], dont la première visite au Nigeria date de 2005, jouent un rôle important de mise en relation publique, d'information et de définition des priorités. Le Foreign and Commonwealth Office

[19] *Ibid*., p. 95.
[20] 26 missions en 2012, voir Paul WILLIAMS, « Britain, the EU and Africa », in Adekeye ADEBAJO & Kaye WHITEMAN (eds.), *The EU and Africa. From Eurafrique to Afro-Europa*, London : Hurst & Co., 2012, p. 359; Tom CARGILL, 'More with Less: Trends in UK Diplomatic Engagement in Sub-Saharan Africa », Africa Programme Paper AFP PP 2011/03, Chatham House, May 2011. Le Japon possède également 27 ambassades. Au sein du FCO à Londres, l'ensemble des pays africains est couvert par 55 personnes.
[21] Tom CARGILL, « More with Less », *op. cit*., p. 22.
[22] John Robert KELLEY, « The New Diplomacy: Evolution of a Revolution », *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, vol. 21, n° 2, 2010, p. 296.
[23] All-Party Parliamentary Group on Nigeria (APPGN), « Young Democracy », [April] 2012 Country Visit Report of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Nigeria, London, 2012.

lui-même favorise de plus en plus ouvertement les échanges avec divers groupes de la société civile issus des diasporas africaines, comme en témoignent les consultations et conférences organisées à Londres en 2012[24]. À l'heure où les résidents britanniques nés en Afrique représentent une proportion importante de la population[25], plusieurs organisations ont pris une influence nouvelle, comme AFFORD (African Foundation for Development), basée à Shoreditch et créée en 1994 par Chukwu-Emeka Chikezie et Nicholas Atampugre afin de promouvoir la contribution de la diaspora africaine au développement de l'Afrique[26]. C'est aussi le cas de CANUK (Central Association of Nigerians in the United Kingdom), formée en 2005 par plus de 80 associations nigérianes avec le soutien du haut-commissariat du Nigeria à Londres, et qui compte actuellement plus 120 associations et plus de 40 000 membres. Les manifestations culturelles et la production artistique jouent également un rôle fondamental, à l'image de Film Africa[27]. Festival annuel, organisé à Londres pour la première fois en 2011 par la Royal African Society et la School of Oriental and African Studies[28], Film Africa met à l'écran des films de réalisateurs africains ou issus de la diaspora, présentant une image de l'Afrique différente de celle traditionnellement véhiculée dans les média. En 1997, la décision de Robin Cook, alors Foreign Secretary, de formaliser les échanges entre le FCO et les ONGs travaillant sur la question des droits de l'homme[29] afin de renforcer la « dimension éthique » de la politique étrangère britannique a très certainement marqué un tournant. Mais l'influence des réseaux de relations complexes entre société civile, gouvernement et parlement, n'est pas, en soi, un phénomène récent. Tony Chafer et Gordon Cumming rappellent l'émergence de War on Want, ou le soutien accordé aux ONGs en Afrique par le Joint Funding Scheme de James Callaghan en 1975. Kunle Lawal évoque le Movement for Colonial Freedom (MCF) de Fenner Brockway, et Gary Blank, la mobilisation des dockers contre l'envoi d'armes au gouvernement du Général Gowon pendant la guerre civile au Nigeria de 1967-

[24] Africa UK 2012, « Annual Conference: Faith and Development in Africa: A new perspective on Diaspora Engagement? », www.africa-uk.org/news/africa-uk-2012-annual-conference-summary (consulté le 23 janvier 2013); voir également Chatham House, « Africa Programme Meeting Summary, British Government Consultation with the UK-based Somali Diaspora », 8 février 2012 – rencontre organisée à la veille de la conférence internationale sur la Somalie à Londres le 23 février, en présence, entre autres, de William Hague et Henry Bellingham, ministre en charge de l'Afrique au FCO.

[25] Selon les chiffres du dernier recensement (2011), le nombre de résidents londoniens nés en Afrique se décompose de la manière suivante : 114 718 Nigérians; 62 896 Ghanéens; 64 212 Kenyans; 65 333 Somaliens; 57 765 Sud-Africains ; 21 309 Zimbabwéens – source : *2011 Census: QS203EW Country of birth (detailed), local authorities in England and Wales*, www.ons.gov.uk (consulté le 20 janvier 2013).

[26] Site internet: <www.afford-uk.org>.

[27] Site internet: <www.filmafrica.org.uk>; Twitter: @FilmAfrica (hashtag - FilmAfrica2012) ; Facebook: Film Africa ; Vimeo: filmafrica12.

[28] Hackney, Brixton, Bethnal Green, Islington, Peckham et le British Film Institute (Southbank). L'évènement est actuellement sponsorisé par le Centre of African Studies de la SOAS, IC Publications (*New African*, *African Business*, *African Banker*, *New African Woman*, *Le Magazine de l'Afrique* et *Femme Africaine*), la compagnie énergétique Ophir Energy Plc. et Renaissance Group, banque d'investissement qui opère dans les marches émergents.

[29] Robin COOK, « Putting Principle into Practice: The Role of Human Rights in Foreign Policy », *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, vol. 15, n° 1, 2002, p. 45.

1970 – question qui, conjointement au Vietnam et à l'Afrique australe, suscita au sein d'Oxfam et du MCF une mobilisation intense. Les réseaux transnationaux de lutte contre l'apartheid, dont l'Anti-Apartheid Movement, fondé en 1960, ont fait l'objet de nombreuses études[30]. Plus marginalisés dans l'historiographie, en revanche, mais tout aussi importants, sont les liens tissés entre le parti travailliste et les mouvements pour l'indépendance de l'Afrique portugaise, notamment avec les leaders du FRELIMO pendant les années de lutte armée. Comme le montre Pedro Aires Oliveira, la politique étrangère britannique au Mozambique après 1975 est indissociable de l'expérience travailliste du Committee for the Freedom of Mozambique, Angola and Guinea (CFMAG), formé à Londres sous l'impulsion des leaders du FRELIMO et présidé par Anthony Gifford, qui siègeait alors à la Chambre des Lords.

Les multilatéralismes des indépendances : une lente maturation

Comme le démontrent les articles rassemblés ici, la conception de la politique étrangère et les pratiques diplomatiques sont au cœur des enjeux des transferts de pouvoir en Afrique et invitent à reconsidérer leur temporalité. Kunle Lawal analyse ainsi l'influence de l'administration britannique sur les structures institutionnelles et les objectifs politiques de la politique étrangère du gouvernement Balewa au Nigeria, et les pratiques destinées à limiter les conséquences stratégiques du retrait politique et constitutionnel de 1960. L'importance d'évaluer les relations personnelles et professionnelles alors nouées et de retracer les carrières individuelles dans la formulation des politiques adoptées mérite d'être soulignée. Le parcours africain de S. J. Fingland, qui conseille Abubakar sur les questions de politique étrangère en 1959-1960, le mène en Rhodésie en 1964 avant qu'il n'occupe deux postes de haut-commissaire sur le continent, en Sierra Leone en 1966 puis au Kenya entre 1975 et 1979. Les expériences individuelles sont également indissociables de l'étude du désengagement militaire qui constitue alors un des piliers d'une pleine indépendance. Les contributions de Kunle Lawal et Gary Blank, évoquant les relations militaires entre Grande-Bretagne et Nigeria (composition de l'armée, accords de défense, fourniture d'armes), soulignent la lente redistribution des pouvoirs, à une époque où la Grande-Bretagne intervient en Afrique de l'Est pour aider les gouvernements nouvellement indépendants à mater les mutineries de 1963-1964.

Ce n'est que très progressivement que les multilatéralismes s'affranchissent des dynamiques coloniales, sous l'impulsion des échanges entre les diplomates des États émergents. Si l'influence de la Communauté économique européenne (CEE) déconstruit à moyen terme les réseaux économiques et commerciaux de la période

[30] Voir, par exemple, James BARBER, *The Uneasy Relationship: Britain and South Africa*, London : Heinemann for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1983; Ronald HYAM & Peter HENSHAW, *The Lion and the Springbok: Britain and South Africa since the Boer War*, Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2003. Ou plus récemment, Stephen ELLIS, *External Mission: The ANC in Exile, 1960-1990*, London : C. Hurst & Co., 2012; Hilary SAPIRE & Chris SAUNDERS (eds.), *Southern African Liberation Struggles: New Local, Regional and Global Perspectives*, Cape Town : UCT Press, 2013.

coloniale[31], les termes des traités d'association, des articles de Rome (1957) à la première Convention de Yaoundé (1963), donnent un avantage considérable à la CEE, et plus particulièrement à la France, tandis que l'absence de la Grande-Bretagne prolonge la division franco-britannique de l'Afrique au-delà des indépendances. Par ailleurs, comme le démontre Guia Migani dans ce numéro, les conventions entre la CEE et les anciens territoires de ses membres fonctionnent alors sur un principe d'exclusivité qui majore une partie des inégalités commerciales dans le reste du monde en développement. Pour les gouvernements britanniques successifs, les multilatéralismes qui accompagnent les indépendances ne constituent pas les outils diplomatiques d'influence internationale escomptée, mais représentent néanmoins une échelle conceptuelle et un espace d'action importants pour redéfinir le rôle britannique dans les changements globaux. C'est le cas, par exemple, du Commonwealth des Nations, dont l'indépendance vis-à-vis de la Grande-Bretagne et l'identité distincte s'affirment avec la création du Secrétariat du Commonwealth en 1965. La crise rhodésienne de 1965, analysée ici par Virginie Roiron, et les négociations qui aboutissent à la Convention de Lomé en 1975, étudiée par Guia Migani, soulignent bien les repositionnements britanniques face à des pays africains qui allient leurs propres diplomaties et coordonnent leurs divergences politiques et économiques afin de présenter un front commun face aux anciennes puissances coloniales et aux pays du Nord. Certes, la position modérée du Nigeria explique largement le choix de Lagos pour accueillir le premier sommet des Chefs d' État et de gouvernement du Commonwealth en Afrique en janvier 1966, entièrement consacré à la Rhodésie. Mais Virginie Roiron, comme Kunle Lawal, souligne l'évolution sensible de l'indépendance diplomatique des pays africains à cette période, dont les stratégies ne se conçoivent par rapport aux impératifs de politique intérieure et d'ambitions continentales qu'en fonction de l'influence, relative, de l'ancienne puissance. Si la Grande-Bretagne demeure le pays clé pour l'ensemble des membres du Commonwealth[32], cela n'est aucunement une garantie de relations privilégiées. Alors que le Soudan, le Congo, la Guinée et le Mali rompent les relations avec Londres en 1965, le Ghana et la Tanzanie font de même tout en demeurant au sein du Commonwealth – et l'isolement grandissant de la Grande-Bretagne sur la question des sanctions en Afrique du Sud, particulièrement sous les gouvernements Heath et Thatcher, montre combien le Commonwealth des Nations moderne s'est construit en relation avec la politique étrangère britannique en Afrique. Comme le souligne Virginie Roiron au sujet de la crise de 1965, l'émergence d'un « Commonwealth africain » ne signifie aucunement uniformité ou faction coordonnée. La crise actuelle au Zimbabwe, qui a quitté le Commonwealth en 2003 après avoir été suspendu pour violations de la démocratie et des droits de l'homme en 2002, a profondément divisé les pays africains et le Commonwealth lui-même[33] - contrairement au souhait formulé par Robin Cook et malgré une série d'engagements de principe, le Commonwealth ne signifie pas encore « Common

[31] Véronique DIMIER, « Construire l'Association: regards croisés euro-africains », *Matériaux pour l'histoire de notre temps*, vol. 77, 2005, pp. 32-38.
[32] Ali MAZRUI, *The Anglo-African Commonwealth: Political Friction and Cultural Fusion*, Oxford : Pergamon, 1967.
[33] Ian TAYLOR, « The Devilish Thing: The Commonwealth and Zimbabwe's Dénouement », *The Round Table: The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 94, n° 380, 2005, p. 374.

Rights »[34] au sein de ses sociétés, africaines ou autres. L'accord récent entre le Canada et la Grande-Bretagne pour la mise en place de missions conjointes, notamment en Afrique, semblerait puiser aux premiers temps d'un Commonwealth des Dominions, avec toutes les ambiguïtés que cela comporte. Enfin, les paramètres géographiques de « l'Afrique du Commonwealth » ont été profondément remodelés lorsque le Rwanda est devenu en 2009 le 54ème membre de l'Organisation, avec le soutien marqué de Londres et Kampala[35]. Au-delà des logiques propres aux processus de construction régionale en Afrique de l'est, les rivalités héritées de la période coloniale et des transitions post-coloniales – où le Commonwealth continue d'être perçu comme une force héritière de l'empire et presque nécessairement un moyen d'opposition à la France et à ses réseaux – demeurent prégnantes.

Diplomatie commerciale et politique de développement : la politique britannique face aux ressources étatiques et sociétales

L'emphase mise par les gouvernements Blair sur la « dimension éthique » de la politique étrangère a donné à l'Afrique une place centrale dans les discours officiels. Comme l'a si bien démontré Julia Gallagher, l'Afrique a constitué pour le New Labour une stratégie pour compenser les critiques nationales et internationales à l'encontre des interventions militaires en Afghanistan et en Iraq, tout en projetant l'image d'une nation et d'un État britanniques régénérés[36]. L'image de l'Afrique ainsi projetée est alors doublement ambivalente : le discours moral sur la politique étrangère en Afrique présente de fortes similitudes avec le discours civilisateur des heures de la conquête coloniale, tandis que l'Afrique elle-même est tour à tour idéalisée et déconsidérée, théâtre d'une lutte du « bien contre le mal »[37], autour de personnalités comme Nelson Mandela ou, à l'autre extrême, Charles Taylor. Il n'est pas ici question de nier l'importance de la dimension « morale et éthique »[38], si largement obscurcie aux temps de la Guerre froide, comme en témoignent les politiques des gouvernements successifs face à la question des sanctions en Afrique du Sud, des régimes autocratiques et de l'attribution de l'aide internationale. Cependant, le poids des intérêts et des acteurs économiques face aux richesses du continent ne peut être écarté de l'étude de la politique étrangère britannique en Afrique. Qu'il s'agisse des concurrences commerciales qui sous-tendent le conflit actuel en République Démocratique du Congo, des négociations pour la régulation internationale des diamants à travers le processus de Kimberley[39] ou de l'insécurité de la zone pétrolière des côtes nigérianes et camerounaises, l'accès aux ressources

[34] COOK, *op. cit*., p. 50.
[35] Victoria TE VELDE, *The Commonwealth Brand. Global Voice, Local Action*, London : Ashgate, 2013.
[36] Julia GALLAGHER, « Healing the Scar? Idealizing Britain in Africa, 1997-2007 », *African Affairs*, vol. 108, n° 432, 2009; et, du même auteur, *Britain and Africa under Blair: in pursuit of the Good state*, Manchester : Manchester University Press, 2011.
[37] GALLAGHER, « Healing the Scar? », *op. cit.*
[38] Paul WILLIAMS, « The Rise and Fall of the "Ethical Dimension": Presentation and Practice in New Labour's Foreign Policy », vol. 15, n° 1, 2002, p. 63.
[39] J. A. GRANT, « Global governance and conflict diamonds: the Kimberley Process and the quest for clean gems », *The Round Table, The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 93, n° 375, 2004.

du continent est au cœur des stratégies internationales en Afrique. Les nouvelles orientations de la politique africaine de la Chine et l'expansion de son réseau diplomatique en Afrique s'expliquent en grande partie par des considérations économiques[40] – la Chine devra importer 80% de son pétrole à l'horizon 2020 et investit dans de multiples secteurs de l'économie africaine, sur l'ensemble du continent (télécommunications, pêche, construction, énergie, secteur bancaire ou industrie agro-alimentaire)[41]. Il en va de même pour les États arabes, notamment (mais pas seulement) en Afrique de l'Est[42], ou encore pour le Brésil, bien qu'à moindre échelle jusqu'à présent.

Premier marché en Afrique sub-saharienne (hors Afrique du Sud) au début du 20ème siècle, le Nigeria demeure un des principaux pôles économiques de l'Afrique[43], réel et potentiel, et un pays prioritaire dans la politique étrangère britannique, comme le soulignent les contributions réunies ici. Gary Blank analyse le poids des intérêts économiques dans la formulation de la politique du gouvernement Wilson face à la guerre civile nigériane. Plus que la crainte que la sécession biafraise n'ouvre la « balkanisation » de l'Afrique et, par là-même, la porte à l'expansion soviétique, la question de l'accès aux réserves pétrolières du Biafra a exercé une influence déterminante sur le soutien de la Grande-Bretagne au gouvernement fédéral du Général Gowon, à une époque où la Guerre des Six Jours renforce la dépendance britannique à l'égard du pétrole nigérian[44]. Les relations entre la Grande-Bretagne et la CEE, ainsi que le souligne Guia Migani, ne peuvent faire l'économie du facteur nigérian. Lors des négociations pour les accords d'association dans les années 1970, l'ensemble des acteurs concernés, en Europe comme en Afrique, donne au Nigeria un poids essentiel dans la formation de leurs politiques – notamment lorsqu'après la conférence de Lagos, en juillet 1973, c'est le ministre du commerce nigérian, W. Briggs, qui devient porte-parole du groupe Afrique. Deux des quatre objectifs identifiés par l'APPGN en 2012 concernent l'économie: soutien aux entreprises britanniques souhaitant investir au Nigeria et appui à la réforme du secteur énergétique[45]. L'importance des questions financières et commerciales, toutefois, doit être envisagée au regard de la multiplicité des acteurs qui mènent les échanges avec l'Afrique. Gary Blank souligne la divergence des intérêts « économiques » britanniques lors de la guerre civile nigériane. La position de Shell-BP est un facteur essentiel dans les prises de décision du gouvernement britannique, mais les conséquences du conflit nigérian sont

[40] Ian TAYLOR, « The "All-Weather Friend"? Sino-African Interaction in the Twenty-First Century », in Ian TAYLOR & Paul WILLIAMS (eds.), *Africa in International Politics. External Involvement on the Continent*, London : Routledge, 2004, p. 83.
[41] Josephine OSIKENA, « Geopolitics Beyond Washington? Africa's Alternative Security and Development Partnerships », in David FRANCIS (ed.), *US Strategy in Africa. AFRICOM, Terrorism and Security Challenges*, London : Routledge, 2011.
[42] *Ibid.*
[43] AAPGN, *op. cit*., p. 4.
[44] L'accès aux ressources demeure, de fait, un outil important de la politique nigériane à l'égard de la Grande-Bretagne, comme en témoigne la nationalisation de Shell-BP par le Général Obasanjo en 1979, dans le contexte de tensions grandissantes entre la Grande-Bretagne et les pays africains sur la question des sanctions contre le régime d'apartheid en Afrique du Sud.
[45] APPGN, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

interprétées différemment par Shell-BP et le haut-commissariat britannique au Nigeria, tandis qu'elles suscitent également des divisions au sein même de l'administration britannique. Pedro Aires Oliveira note également l'influence en Angola de BP, de Lonrho, présidée par Tiny Rowlands, et de Tanganyika Concessions, déjà au cœur des luttes pour les transferts de pouvoir en Afrique centrale, du Katanga aux Rhodésies.

Parallèlement, l'aide au développement constitue à la fois un domaine et un outil de la politique étrangère britannique en Afrique. Comme le démontre Pedro Aires Oliveira au sujet du Mozambique à l'heure de l'indépendance en 1975, l'aide est une forme de « soft power » importante, par laquelle le gouvernement britannique espère circonscrire la présence communiste *et* influencer les relations avec la Rhodésie d'Ian Smith, que la chute de l'empire portugais affaiblit considérablement. Certes, l'engagement britannique en Afrique depuis les indépendances est resté très relatif, ne représentant par exemple que 16% des contributions françaises en 1987[46], alors même que les Britanniques voyaient l'aide comme un moyen de maintenir une stabilité politique et de garantir des alliances, même relatives, avec les puissances occidentales. Depuis la création du DFID en 1997, cependant, les contributions en Afrique et la proportion de l'Afrique dans le budget général de l'aide ont considérablement augmenté. Entre 1997 et 2007, le budget du DFID consacré aux programmes en Afrique a quadruplé[47], tandis que le gouvernement de coalition renouvelait récemment la promesse britannique de consacrer 0.7% du PIB à l'aide extérieure – et d'inscrire cette même promesse dans la législation[48]. En 2011-2012, plus de la moitié des fonds du DFID pour les programmes nationaux et régionaux étaient attribués à l'Afrique, et six pays africains se trouvent dans les dix premiers bénéficiaires de l'aide au développement britannique[49]. Ici encore, la Grande-Bretagne, et les puissances européennes de façon plus générale, font face à la présence croissante des BRICs sur la scène africaine. La contribution de l'Inde à l'aide au développement en Afrique a été multiplié par plus de 27 entre 1990 et 2013[50] et s'appuie très largement sur les organisations régionales africaines, comme la CEDEAO (Communauté économique

[46] Gordon CUMMING, « UK African Policy in the Post-Cold War Era: From Realpolitik to Moralpolitik? », *Comparative and Commonwealth Politics*, vol. 42, n° 1, 2004, p. 108.

[47] Le budget des programmes bilatéraux et régionaux passe ainsi de £300 millions à £1.25 milliard, Paul WILLIAMS, « Britain, the EU and Africa », in Adekeye ADEBAJO & Kaye WHITEMAN (eds.), *The EU and Africa. From Eurafrique to Afro-Europa*, London : Hurst & Co., 2012, p. 358.

[48] DFID, Aid Commitments: Britain sets out pledges for UK aid, 7 January 2013, www.dfid.gov.uk/News/Latest-news/2013/Aid-commitments-britain-sets-out-pledges-for-UK-aid (consulté le 10 janvier 2013).

[49] Il s'agit, en ordre décroissant d'attribution (en millions de livres), des pays suivants: Ethiopie (324.1), Inde (268.4), Pakistan (215.8), Bangladesh (202.8), Nigeria (171.5), Afghanistan (153.9), RDC (142.7), Tanzanie (141.0), Somalie (102.9) et Kenya (94.3). Les principaux bénéficiaires africains sont ensuite les suivants : Zimbabwe (88), Mozambique (87.5), Ghana (78.9), Soudan du Sud (77.9), Ouganda (75.3), Rwanda (74.7) et Malawi (69). Source: DFID, Annual Report and Accounts 2011-12 (for the year ended 31 March 2012), London, The Stationery Office, juillet 2012, p. 35.

[50] Sachin CHATURVEDI, « India's Development Partnership: Key Policy Shifts and Institutional Evolution », *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, vol. 25, n° 4, 2012.

des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest), ou les initiatives pan-africaines, comme le NEPAD (New Partnership for African Development). Depuis 2008, le Brésil s'est également investi dans l'aide au développement en Afrique, se concentrant surtout sur les questions de protection sociale et d'éducation[51]. L'Afrique du Sud et, dans une moindre mesure, le Nigeria, ont également développé certaines politiques d'aide, bénéficiant par ailleurs d'une meilleure compréhension des réalités, besoins et complexités du continent, même si les deux géants de l'Afrique sub-saharienne sont eux-mêmes confrontés, dans leur espace national, à des problèmes d'accès à la santé, à l'éducation et à la sécurité parfois aigus[52].

Sur les questions de développement aussi, par conséquent, les politiques britanniques sont formulées et ajustées dans divers cadres multilatéraux, des institutions financières internationales aux programmations de la CEE, puis de l'Union européenne (UE) après 1992. Les contributions de Guia Migani et Gordon Cumming réévaluent l'importance des bilatéralismes et multilatéralismes pour l'aide au développement britannique, offrant ainsi un éclairage précieux sur les évolutions à moyen terme d'une politique qui se pense d'abord dans le cadre du FCO dans les années 1970, puis dans celui du DFID après 1997. Elles mettent également en regard les capacités d'influence mutuelles du Secrétariat du Commonwealth ou de la Commission européenne, des gouvernements et administrations britanniques, ou encore des organisations régionales africaines qui émergent alors, comme la Communauté de développement de l'Afrique australe (CDAA ou Southern African Development Community – SADC). Guia Migani replace les perspectives mondialistes de la Grande-Bretagne travailliste après 1974 dans le contexte des discussions sur le financement et le fonctionnement du Fonds européen d'aide (FED), au sein d'une CEE où les divisions sont bien plus complexes que le simple désaccord franco-britannique sur les modalités de l'association des pays du Commonwealth. Comme Guia Migani, Gordon Cumming inscrit la politique britannique en Afrique dans un cadre d'analyse plus global à l'égard des pays du Sud. Son étude des dynamiques de l'aide au développement britannique opère ainsi une réévaluation du rôle britannique au sein de l'Europe, plus constructif que ne l'entend le discours dominant, tout en éclairant les distinctions entre régions africaines, où le poids des héritages coloniaux, notamment linguistiques et culturels, reste sensible. Les collaborations récentes entre le DFID et l'Agence française de développement sur la santé et l'éducation, ou encore les programmes avec les administrations allemandes, norvégiennes ou hollandaises, sont privilégiées au sein d'une UE que le DFID a récemment identifiée comme un partenaire multilatéral fiable et efficace (contrairement au Commonwealth) dans la maximisation de l'aide au développement[53].

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[51] OSIKENA, *op. cit.*; Christina SOLTE, « Brazil in Africa: Just Another BRICS Country Seeking Resources? », Chatham House, Africa Programme and Americas Programme, Nov. 2012.

[52] Brendan VICKERS, « Towards a New Aid Paradigm: South Africa as African Development Partner », *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, vol. 78, n° 1, 2002, p. 553.

[53] DFID, Multilateral Aid Review: Ensuring maximum value for money for UK aid through multilateral organisations, London, 2011, www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications1/mar/multilateral_aid_review.pdf. (consulté le 23 janvier 2013).

Fondamentaux, de fait, sont deux volets de la gestion de l'aide au développement : son utilisation par les gouvernements bénéficiaires, et la surveillance/évaluation des canaux de transferts de l'aide, notamment les ONGs, qui sont presque devenues le principal bras opérationnel du DFID sur le terrain[54]. Gordon Cumming revient sur la notion de la conditionnalité de l'aide, évoque les positions du Foreign Secretary travailliste David Owen lors des négociations pour Lomé II et met en perspective l'impact de la fin de l'ère Thatcher, de l'apartheid et de la Guerre froide sur la mise en relation de la promotion du développement et des droits de l'homme sur le continent africain. Les transformations de l'année 2000 soulignent combien la question demeure complexe. Les accords de Cotonou, alors signés par l'UE et les pays ACP, sont fondés sur trois piliers centraux: aide au développement à travers le FED, coopération commerciale sur la base des accords de partenariat économique (APE) et dialogue politique, tandis que le Sommet Europe-Afrique du Caire accorde une place centrale à la promotion des droits de l'homme, de la démocratie et de l'État de droit, et qu'en décembre, le Livre blanc *Making Globalisation Work for the Poor* fait de la lutte contre la pauvreté dans le monde un objectif prioritaire, du ressort du DFID (et non du FCO)[55]. L'évaluation de la question des droits au Rwanda est, à cet égard, significative. Comme le démontre l'article de Dean White, ce n'est que très tardivement que le génocide de 1994 a éveillé les consciences d'une classe politique britannique largement indifférente et qui pense longtemps le conflit en termes de « simple » guerre civile. Paul Kagame est alors transformé en un véritable « sauveur »[56] d'un Rwanda devenu dès 1997 un des pays clés de la politique de développement du DFID, après l'ouverture d'une ambassade britannique à Kigali en 1995[57]. Ce n'est qu'en novembre 2012, suite à un rapport de l'ONU, aux conclusions d'une commission d'enquête parlementaire britannique et aux virulents débats au sein du gouvernement de coalition que l'aide au Rwanda a été suspendue et conditionnée, entre autres, à la condamnation publique du Mouvement du 23 mars (M23) en RDC par le gouvernement rwandais. Si la commission parlementaire recommandait que la promotion des droits de l'homme soit au cœur des politiques du DFID, les paramètres du « nouvel humanitarisme »[58] demeurent complexes.

D'une part, les logiques de marché semblent primer sur une approche plus fondamentalement sociale et sociétale du développement. L'importance accordée au néo-libéralisme par les gouvernements successifs, New Labour compris, s'est accompagnée d'une marginalisation relative des droits économiques et sociaux au

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[54] Tom PORTEOUS, *Britain and Africa*, London : Zed Books, 2008, p. 60.
[55] Point renforcé dans le International Development Act de 2002. Sur les rivalités entre DFID et FCO et les zones d'ombre dans les attributions des deux ministères, voir, entre autres, CUMMING, *op. cit*., p. 114.
[56] Richard DOWDEN, « Congo: UK and US Must Play More Consistent Hand to End World's Worst War », *African Arguments*, 27 novembre 2012, <africanarguments.org/2012/11/27/congo-uk-and-us-must-play-more-consistent-hand-to-end-worlds-worst-war-by-richard-dowden> (consulté le 21 janvier 2013).
[57] Zoe MARRIAGE, « Defining Morality: DFID and the Great Lakes », *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 27, n° 3, p. 480.
[58] *Ibid.*, p. 484.

profit d'une définition plus exclusivement politique des droits de l'homme[59], tandis que l'augmentation du volume global de l'aide a pu masquer un certain nombre de limites conceptuelles et pratiques. Les nouvelles orientations de l'UE ont également renforcé une approche néo-libérale des relations avec l'Afrique, et plusieurs études récentes soulignent l'impact négatif que les accords de Cotonou[60] comme les accords de partenariat économique (APE)[61] peuvent avoir sur les processus d'intégration régionale en Afrique. D'autre part, les réorganisations de l'administration britannique semblent renforcer la priorité donnée au commerce et au bilatéralisme. Gordon Cumming met l'engagement multilatéral britannique en perspective, rappelant que dans les années 1990 déjà, la Grande-Bretagne avait favorisé l'aide bilatérale plutôt qu'une augmentation du FED. Avec Tony Chafer, il souligne que si l'aide multilatérale a augmenté en chiffres absolus, elle a en réalité décliné en termes relatifs, par rapport à l'aide bilatérale. Certaines missions du DFID en Afrique ont fermé en mars 2011[62]. La redistribution des responsabilités entre le DFID et le FCO, à l'avantage de ce dernier, accentue encore l'importance du commerce dans le faisceau des intérêts britanniques en Afrique. Plusieurs études ont démontré l'importance de prendre en compte le rôle des migrants africains, qui entretiennent des relations très étroites, individuelles et collectives, politiques et économiques, avec les pays d'origine, dans la conception des politiques de développement[63]. Cette dimension apparaît bien dans le discours officiel[64]. Mais elle ouvre vers des conclusions politiques très diverses, et démontre la nécessité de repenser les défis et opportunités que les flux et mouvements transnationaux constituent pour les sociétés des pays ainsi mis en relation.

De la Guerre froide aux nouveaux enjeux sécuritaires : les ambivalences de l'approche multilatérale

Jusqu'au tournant des années 1990, la Guerre froide a exercé une influence considérable sur la dimension sécuritaire de la politique étrangère en Afrique. Ce fut particulièrement vrai, comme le montre Pedro Aires Oliveira, en Afrique australe, qui fut le théâtre d'affrontements sans comparaison entre les interventionnismes cubains, soviétiques et sud-africains, mobilisant plus qu'ailleurs les réseaux de renseignements américains et britanniques. Depuis la fin de la Guerre froide, plusieurs évènements et phénomènes ont modifié les paramètres des enjeux sécuritaires en Afrique. Dix ans après le Rwanda et quatre ans après la publication

[59] Paul WILLIAMS, « The Rise and Fall of the "Ethical Dimension": Presentation and Practice in New Labour's Foreign Policy », *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, vol. 15, n° 1, 2002.
[60] Stephen R. HURT, « Co-operation and Coercion? The Cotonou Agreement between the European Union and ACP States and the End of the Lomé Convention », *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 24, n° 1, p. 170.
[61] Oladiran BELLO, « The EU-Africa Partnership: At a Strategic Crossroads », FRIDE (A European Think Tank for Global Action) Policy Brief, n° 47, 2010, p. 3.
[62] Angola, Burundi, Cameroun, Gambie, Lesotho et Niger, voir Cargill, *op. cit.*, p. 6.
[63] David STYAN, « EU Power and Armed Humanitarianism in Africa: Evaluating ESDP in Chad », *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, vol. 25, n° 4, 2012.
[64] William HAGUE, « A New Effort to Help Somalia », Chatham House British Government Consultation on Somalia, 8 février 2012.

du rapport Brahimi sur les opérations de maintien de la paix, l'ONU a formulé le plan d'action pour la prévention du génocide, à une époque où le gouvernement britannique prenait position en faveur de la responsabilité de protéger. Les zones d'ombre, cependant, demeurent nombreuses et les débats sur la définition des mandats, le financement des opérations et le périmètre de l'usage de la force extrêmement vifs. La force d'inaction de la « communauté internationale » demeure importante et le travail de conceptualisation dans les instances internationales inadéquate[65]. Par ailleurs, si le Groupe de Rio et le Mouvement des Non-Alignés ont appelé les États développés à engager des troupes plus nombreuses dans les opérations de maintien de la paix de l'ONU[66], les réticences sont extrêmement sensibles. Mobilisés sur les terrains afghan et iraquien, les forces britanniques ne représentaient qu'une proportion infime des forces de l'ONU en Afrique entre 2001 et 2010[67]. Dans l'après Guerre froide, le poids des enjeux sécuritaires dans la politique étrangère de la Grande-Bretagne et de ses principaux partenaires n'a en rien diminué, des attaques terroristes au Kenya en 1998 et 2002 aux raids des pirates des côtes somaliennes ou aux mouvements islamistes du nord du Nigeria. Africa Command (AFRICOM), établie par les États-Unis en août 2008 pour coordonner les actions militaires et humanitaires américaines[68] sur le continent, témoigne de ces considérations. L'expansion des entreprises militaires et de sécurité privées, ou le recours massif aux enfants soldats dans les guerres civiles, de la Sierra Leone à la RDC, demandent également une nouvelle approche de la résolution des conflits.

Le gouvernement de coalition, comme les gouvernements Blair et Brown avant lui, affirme parallèlement que la lutte contre les causes profondes de la pauvreté dans le monde constitue une condition nécessaire à la promotion de la paix. Souvent présentée comme un des succès de l'ère Blair, l'intervention britannique militaire en Sierra Leone fut suivie d'un processus d'aide à la reconstruction, à la réforme des institutions et à la promotion des initiatives de réconciliation à l'issue de la guerre civile. Au sein même de l'administration britannique, plusieurs cellules furent constituées dans ce sens – l'Africa Conflict Prevention Pool en 2001, qui intègre le Global Conflict Prevention Pool en 2008, la Africa Conflict and Humanitarian Unit en 2003 et la Post-Conflict Reconstruction Unit en 2004, qui réunit le FCO, le DFID et le Ministry of Defence. Si plusieurs études ont déploré une approche trop institutionnelle, « par le haut », ou noté la subordination persistante des questions de paix internationale aux impératifs de la politique nationale[69], le discours sur l'intervention en Sierra Leone a eu au moins le mérite de poser le principe d'une approche globale des conflits. En parallèle, la Grande-Bretagne est un des quatre grands acteurs de l'UE derrière la Facilité de Paix pour l'Afrique, créée en 2004 sur proposition de l'Union africaine, et financée conjointement par le FED et les pays africains. L'UE soutient ainsi la conduite

[65] Christine GRAY, « Peacekeeping and enforcement action in Africa: the role of Europe and the obligations of multilateralism », *Review of International Studies*, n° 31, 2005, p. 213; Alex DE WAAL, « Darfur and the Failure of the Responsibility to Protect », *International Affairs*, vol. 83, n° 6, 2007, p. 1054.
[66] GRAY, *op. cit.*, p. 209.
[67] WILLIAMS, « Britain, Africa and the EU », *op. cit.*, p. 352.
[68] OSIKENA, *op. cit.*
[69] CUMMING, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

d'opérations du maintien de la paix par les pays africains eux-mêmes, à travers l'Union africaine ou les organisations africaines régionales[70]. Depuis 2007, le partenariat « Paix et Sécurité » a identifié trois grands pôles prioritaires : renforcement des capacités, opérations de soutien à la paix et mécanisme de réponse précoce (MRP), centré sur la prévention des conflits.[71] Au sein de l'UE, la promotion des relations avec le parlement pan-africain de l'Union africaine, opérationnel depuis 2004, et le soutien au Mécanisme africain d'évaluation par les pairs (MAEP) œuvrent dans ce même sens.

Au-delà de ces évolutions, toutefois, des constantes fortes apparaissent dans la politique britannique en matière de sécurité. Tout d'abord, les débats sur les enjeux globaux ne doivent pas occulter l'importance des personnes, et personnalités, dans l'élaboration et la mise en œuvre des partenariats internationaux. Au sein de l'administration et des gouvernements britanniques, les divisions sur la guerre civile nigériane, comme le souligne Gary Blank, ou l'attitude à adopter face à l'UNITA, comme le montre Pedro Aires Oliveira, s'expliquent aussi par les parcours individuels des décideurs concernés, et pas seulement par le poids des institutions ou un « intérêt national » uniformément interprété. Gordon Cumming et Tony Chafer évoquent de même des partenariats aussi influents qu'accidentels. Les bonnes relations entre Claude Cheysson et Maurice Foley, au sein de la commission européenne en charge du développement lors des négociations menant à Lomé, l'entente entre les ministres des Affaires étrangères Hubert Védrine et Robin Cook, David Miliband et Bernard Kouchner, ou encore, la sympathie entre Sir Emyr Jones Parry et Jean-Marc de la Sablière, tous deux ambassadeurs à l'ONU entre 2003 et 2007, furent cruciales dans la construction d'une coopération franco-britannique sur les questions africaines. Ces deux auteurs, de même que Pedro Aires Oliveira, notent également l'impact des coïncidences électorales : avantage des gouvernements Wilson et Callaghan dans la conduite des relations avec le Portugal de Mário Soares et le Mozambique de Samora Machel, avec qui le parti avait entretenu des liens avant leurs accessions respectives au pouvoir ; arrivée presque simultanée au gouvernement de Tony Blair et de Lionel Jospin en 1997, facilitant une révision des relations au sujet de l'Afrique.

Deuxièmement, les relations de la Grande-Bretagne avec ses principaux partenaires hors d'Afrique continuent d'influencer très nettement la politique qu'elle mène à l'égard du continent, notamment en matière sécuritaire. Pedro Aires Oliveira analyse très clairement l'impact des dynamiques anglo-américaines sur la position britannique en Angola : l'opposition de l'administration Ford à l'égard du MPLA explique en grande partie le soutien très tardif que le gouvernement travailliste a apporté au mouvement. Ceci ne signifie pas pour autant que la relation anglo-américaine dirige la politique étrangère sur le continent en toutes circonstances, ainsi que le souligne Dean White sur la question du Rwanda. La Grande-Bretagne, à l'image des États-Unis, s'est opposée à une intervention, mais pour des motifs différents et, par ailleurs, le jeu des votes à l'ONU montre que c'est sous l'influence

[70] La première mission à être financée fut l'AMIS, au Darfour, en 2004.

[71] COMMISSION EUROPÉENNE, Développement et Coopération (Europeaid), <ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/acp/regional-cooperation/peace/index_fr.htm> (consulté le 20 janvier 2013).

de la Grande-Bretagne que les États-Unis ont voté finalement pour un retrait partiel – et non total – d'UNAMIR. La position de Londres, affirme Dean White, doit être lue à la lumière des relations franco-britanniques. Le FCO montre une méfiance très nette au sujet de l'Opération Turquoise et de ses motifs profonds mais estime qu'elle présente la meilleure possibilité de limiter le nombre de victimes. Surtout, les responsables britanniques considèrent que toute opposition publique à la politique française dans une région qu'elle connaît si bien (avec toutes les ambigüités que cela comporte) nuirait à l'équilibre des relations franco-britanniques. De fait, en Afrique et au sujet de l'Afrique, les relations franco-britanniques représentent une influence majeure sur la formulation et la mise en application de la politique étrangère britannique, y compris en contexte multilatéral. Tony Chafer et Gordon Cumming, qui ont réalisé de précieux entretiens récents avec de nombreux décideurs à Paris, Londres et Bruxelles, mettent en lumière les avancées considérables comme les limites persistantes de la coopération franco-britannique en Afrique, et proposent une réflexion sur les facteurs et conséquences de ces évolutions, ouvrant la voie vers de possibles réformes. Le Sommet de Saint-Malo en 1998 a ainsi amorcé une coopération plus étroite entre les deux partenaires européens, mise en œuvre lors d'interventions militaires – utilisation de la base de Dakar lors des opérations britanniques en Sierra Leone en 2000, par exemple ; appui matériel, bien que ponctuel, lors du déploiement de troupes françaises au Mali en janvier 2013. Mais l'essentiel de la coopération concerne des domaines relativement plus consensuels, comme l'éducation ou la santé, et au-delà des déclarations communes, Français et Britanniques agissent à partir de cadres conceptuels distincts. Si la France et la Grande-Bretagne soutiennent une approche multilatérale des conflits, Londres marque cependant une distance plus grande que la France face aux opérations de l'ONU ou de l'UE, favorisant un contrôle direct unilatéral sur la direction d'opérations où les vies britanniques sont en jeu, à l'image des opérations en Sierra Leone[72]. Par ailleurs, « l'État franco-africain »[73] continue de peser sur les interprétations britanniques des actions françaises en Afrique. Tony Chafer et Gordon Cumming analysent les désaccords réguliers sur les questions de démocratie et de droits de l'homme – au sujet de la crise au Zimbabwe après 2002, où la question des sanctions à l'encontre du régime de Robert Mugabe a suscité de fortes divisions entre Français et Britanniques, au sein de l'UE, et entre l'UE et l'UA[74] ; en Mauritanie en 2008, ou très récemment encore au Niger en 2010. L'intervention au Tchad, où le gouvernement d'Idris Déby a pu conforter son pouvoir grâce au soutien français, a également renforcé les réserves des Britanniques face à de possibles interventions conjointes avec la France[75]. Sans doute est-il alors plus juste de penser en termes de coordination plutôt que de coopération.

[72] Rachel UTLEY, « "Not to Do Less but to Do Better…": French Military Policy in Africa », *International Affairs*, vol. 78, n° 1, 2002, pp. 141.
[73] Jean-Pierre DOZON, « L'État franco-africain », *Les Temps Modernes* (Afriques du Monde), août-nov., n° 620-621, 2002.
[74] European Centre for Development Policy Management, Issue Paper 1, « The EU-Africa Partnership in Historical Perspective », Towards a Joint Africa-Europe Partnership Strategy, ECDPM, Maastricht, Dec. 2006, p. 5.
[75] STYAN, *op. cit.*, p. 660, 667.

Pour conclure, trois points essentiels méritent d'être soulignés. Tout d'abord, une réelle multilatéralisation des échanges et une décentralisation, ou déconcentration, des pouvoirs, que le partenariat Europe-Afrique appelle de ses vœux, ne saurait faire l'économie d'une réflexion sur la manière de concevoir les droits politiques, civiques, économiques et sociaux. Ceci est particulièrement vrai pour la Grande-Bretagne et la France, qui demeurent, au regard de l'histoire coloniale, des relations africaines depuis les indépendances et des dynamiques européennes actuelles, au cœur d'une réflexion internationale et transnationale sur ces questions. Deuxièmement, la nécessité de penser le cadre sécuritaire de façon globale, de l'agriculture à la défense, de la santé à l'éducation, renforce l'importance des cadres multilatéraux pour la promotion du développement humain. La politique étrangère britannique en Afrique, par conséquent, est inséparable des processus d'intégration régionale, en Afrique comme en Europe. Si l'approche multilatérale ne peut constituer la seule forme d'engagement avec le continent africain, des plans d'action unilatéraux semblent peu réalistes, tant financièrement à l'heure de la crise globale, que politiquement et culturellement. Enfin, l'Afrique, dans sa diversité, demeure trop largement absente des débats parlementaires et du débat public en Grande-Bretagne, hors des crises liées aux guerres, au terrorisme ou à l'immigration, où l'emporte alors le sensationnel. Comme le montre la mise en relation des contributions réunies ici, croisant étude des conceptualisations et des pratiques, réévaluations individuelles et collectives, la politique étrangère britannique a dû prendre acte des indépendances africaines. Mais ce n'est qu'en repensant les relations dans un cadre global, multilatéral et transnational que les pratiques diplomatiques s'affranchiront pleinement des sphères d'influence et mécanismes hérités de la période coloniale. La transformation profonde de la société britannique et la concurrence des nouvelles puissances accentuent l'importance des croisements politiques, intellectuels et culturels avec les Afrique(s).

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Britain, Decolonisation and the Construction of Nigerian Foreign Policy in the Era of Transfers of Power, 1958-1960

Olakunle A. LAWAL
University of Ibadan

Introduction

Britain's decision to embark on colonial reforms after the Second World War was the product of many factors. These included the pressure which the United States[1] and the USSR[2] put on the colonial powers during and especially after the war;[3] the reality of British domestic politics, which pushed colonial issues to the front burners of British public opinion;[4] the official mental turn in the Colonial Office about the future of colonial rule;[5] and above all, the general revulsion of feelings in the colonies, which canalized the aspiration of the colonial peoples for

[1] A most useful analysis of the contributions of the United States to the decline and decolonisation of British colonies worldwide can be found in Wm. Roger LOUIS, *Imperialism At Bay: The United States and the Decolonisation of the British Empire, 1941-1945*, New York: Clarendon Press, 1978.

[2] Details of the politics of decolonisation as played out by the USSR and the USA in the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations can be found in The National Archives (TNA), CO537/6549.

[3] A category of explanations tends to conclude that the Second World War generated ideas that eventually led to the commencement of colonial reforms. See G. O. OLUSANYA, *Second World War and Politics in* Nigeria, 1939-1953, Lagos: Evans Bros, 1973 and David KILLINGRAY & Richard RATHBONE (eds.), *Africa and the Second World War*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1986. However, a recent study by Killingray has suggested that the Second World War did not necessarily turn the thoughts of Africans towards self-determination, see David KILLINGRAY, *Fighting for Britain: African Soldiers in The Second World War*, London: James Currey, 2010.

[4] David GOLDSWORTHY, *Colonial Issues in British Politics 1945-1971: From Colonial Development to Wind of Change*, London: Oxford University Press, 1971. A noteworthy contribution to the reforms of the post-war years were the Labour Party's wartime campaign as well as the activities of the Fabian Colonial Bureau, which highlighted the plight of the colonial peoples and brought these issues to the consciousness of the British public. See LABOUR PARTY, *The Colonies: The Labour Party's Post-War Policy for African and Pacific Colonies*, London, Labour Party, 1943; Arthur CREECH JONES & Rita HINDEN, *Colonies and International Conscience*, London: Fabian Colonial Bureau, 1945. P. S. GUPTA's *Imperialism and the British Labour Movement, 1914-1964*, London: Holmes & Meier, 1975, is an interesting study of this issue.

[5] A useful discussion of the various ideas that were considered in anticipation of the post-1945 colonial reforms can be found in J. E. FLINT, 'Planned Decolonisation and Its Failure in British Africa', *African Affairs*, vol. 82, n° 328, 1983.

freedom. Thus in 1947, the first major manifestation of the official mind of the British government about the future of colonialism in British Africa came in the form of a dispatch signed by the Labour Colonial Secretary, Arthur Creech Jones (himself a virulent anti-colonial spokesman during the war), which expressed the desire of Britain to embark on the integration of the educated elites into local colonial administration.[6] The decision to embrace the educated elites who, for nearly fifty years, had been sidelined in the scheme of things meant, in practical terms, that the traditional rulers who had been the bedrock of British indirect rule would have to be jettisoned and their influence gradually wound down.[7] However, the intention to reform colonial rule remained just that, mere intention, until riots broke out in Accra in 1948[8] and the rise of radical nationalism apparently woke the British up from what can be rightly described as an imperial slumber.[9]

In Nigeria, a major step taken by the British to implement this policy of colonial reform was the decision to recall Sir Arthur Richards (later Lord Milverton) from Nigeria and replace him with Sir John Macpherson as Colonial Governor from 1948. The arrival of Governor John Macpherson in Nigeria marked a significant watershed in the history of Britain's colonial rule in Nigeria after 1945 because he personified the liberalism that had come into effect within the Colonial Office and the changed attitude of British officials towards emergent nationalism in Nigeria after the Second World War. Unlike his predecessor Sir Arthur Richards, who was 'Lugardian' in his attempt to browbeat the nationalists into conformity with Britain's war-time expectations, Sir John Macpherson developed a close working relationship with the nationalists. He wasted no time in courting the friendship of the nationalist leaders who had been isolated by Arthur Richards' hostility. This shows that John Macpherson was conscious of the mood in the Colonial Office, the readiness for change,[10] and symbolized them as far as the future of the colonies was concerned.[11]

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[6] See the following works for a detailed study of this: John W. CELL, 'On the Eve of Decolonisation: The Colonial Office Plans for the Transfer of Power in Africa', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol. 8, n° 3, 1980, and R. D. PEARCE, 'An Addendum to John Cell', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History,* vol. 10, n° 2, 1982.

[7] See David KILLINGRAY & Richard RATHBONE, *op. cit*., p. 17.

[8] Details of the Colonial Office's perception of the aftermath of the Accra Riots of 1948 and its implications for nationalism in Nigeria can be found in the National Archives (Ibadan) (NAI), CSO 583/4/48, Macpherson to Cohen, 19 July 1948.

[9] See. E. E. G. IWERIEBOR, *Radical Politics in Nigeria, 1945-1950: The Significance of the Zikist Movement*, Zaria: ABU Press, 1996; and H. I. TIJANI, 'Britain and the Foundations of Anti-Communist Policies in Nigeria: 1945-1960', *African and Asian Studies,* vol. 8, n° 1-2, 2009.The anti-communist phase of Britain's decolonisation has been discussed in Olakunle A. LAWAL, *Britain and the Transfer of Power in Nigeria, 1945-1960*, Lagos: Lagos State University Press, 2001 (chapter three).

[10] Apart from R. D. PEARCE, *The Turning Point in Africa: British Colonial Policy, 1938-1948*, London: Frank Cass, 1982, and A. N. PORTER and A. J. STOCKWELL (eds.), *British Imperial Policy and Decolonisation: 1938-1964* (vol. 1), Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1987, see also, J. E. FLINT, *op. cit.*. However, a most useful multi-dimensional study of the various aspects of Britain's decolonisation after 1945 can be found in Martin LYNN (ed.), *The British Empire in the 1950s, Retreat or Revival*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.

[11] See Olakunle LAWAL, *op. cit*., chapter two.

By the beginning of 1950, a clearly discernible pattern in British colonial policy had appeared: constitution-mongering, which then became the major instrument of containing anti-colonial nationalism in Nigeria. This was a strategy adopted by Britain to contain the forces of Nigerian nationalism and control the pace of the devolution of power. This was because at the heart of the constitution-making strategy was the concept of preparation, which was meant to tutor the colonial peoples in the niceties of western liberal democratic government. The strategy of constitution-making was expected to keep the British ahead of the nationalists. However, rather than assuage the forces of Nigerian nationalism, the stratagem merely unleashed the inherent 'Oliver Twist' nature of Nigerian nationalist politicians, who were never satisfied with the tokenism offered by the British. Once a modicum of reform was introduced by the British in the early 1950s, Nigerian nationalists demanded more. Merely giving them an opportunity to have a say in their own affairs was not satisfactory, they wanted to control their own destiny. Indeed, on the eve of the commencement of colonial reforms that became decolonisation in the 1950s, the centrifugal forces within Nigeria, as exemplified by mutual suspicion and antagonism between the political parties which appealed to sub-nationalisms (ethnicity), had become so pronounced that even the date of self-government had to be different from one region to the other.[12]

Independence in 1960: the debate within the Colonial Office

The concept of preparing the colonies for self-government had taken roots in 1951, when the first set of elections were held, ostensibly, to incorporate the educated elites into local colonial administration at both the regional and central levels. This election was to provide the British officialdom with the first opportunity to impart to the new leaders of the country the whole ethos of western parliamentary government. For the Nigerian nationalist politicians, it was an opportunity to learn the basic niceties of 'modern' government. However, decolonisation or the transfer of power was not being contemplated at this stage. In fact, it was not until almost a decade after the famous local government dispatch was released that the whole discussion about British disengagement from Nigeria started. Between 1952 and 1956, British officials were content with playing the role of supervisors, overseeing the management of the colony by the new elites that had just been incorporated into local colonial administration.

Up until 1957, British colonial officials believed that outright political independence for Nigeria was still about a decade away. However, with independence for the Gold Coast in 1957, it dawned on the Colonial Office that it was just a matter of time before Nigerian nationalists demanded self-government from Britain. In March 1957, Sir James Robertson wrote to the Colonial Office about the possibility of Nigerian politicians asking for independence in 1959,[13] an

[12] A useful discussion of the appeal to ethnic solidarity as a way of galvanizing support by the political parties has been attempted by J. F. AJAYI and A. E. EKOKO, 'The Transfer of Power in Nigeria: Its Origins and Consequences', in Prosser GIFFORD & Wm. Roger LOUIS (eds.), *Decolonisation and African Independence, The Transfers of Power, 1960-1980*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988.

[13] TNA, CO 554/1583, Robertson to Lord Perth, 16 March 1957.

opinion which was considered disturbing by another senior official of the Colonial Office who actually proposed delaying independence until some time in 1960, arguing that Nigeria could then be better prepared for independence .[14] Although the Colonial Office had expected all along that the independence of the Gold Coast would have an impact on Nigeria,[15] the Colonial Secretary himself suggested at the April 1957 constitutional conference that the conference should not be allowed to agree on 1959 as a date for independence for the federation.[16] It was thought that Britain needed a generation to prepare a united Nigeria for democracy while in 1959, an official noted that two more stages were necessary before the final transfer of power:[17] one step after the 1957 conference, and with some three or four years of preparation, the next after 1960 or 1961.

Colonial officials sounded rather altruistic about putting in place an enduring structural legacy for the emergent nation. Sir James Robertson had noted in June 1956, when nationalists were calling for another round of meetings to review the Lyttelton constitution[18] as agreed in Lagos in 1954, that the Colonial Secretary should emphasize the danger to 'the whole machinery of government which are posed by too frequent changes'.[19] He then advised the Colonial Secretary not to allow himself to be drawn into agreeing, even tentatively, to any date for Nigerian independence.[20] Robertson believed that sudden independence for Nigeria may lead to the collapse of the country and compared independence for Nigeria to a machine which must be in running order before it was granted to the country.[21]

But although Sir James noted that once a semblance of independence was granted it would be difficult to stop it altogether, he pointed out the danger of delaying self-government unduly. If Britain wished to retain the goodwill of the Nigerians, it would be better for the initiative to come from her than for her to be forced to concede it.[22] Although the Colonial Office appears to have been convinced that it owed Nigeria a duty to lay a solid foundation for its political independence, its officials shared Robertson's observation that it would be too risky to delay

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[14] TNA, CO 554/1583, Minute by T. B. Williamson to Secretary of State, 16 March 1957. The proposal was to grant minimal autonomy to the Federal Government at the resumed constitutional conference forecast for 1957.

[15] TNA, CO 554/1583, Minute by T. B. Williamson to Secretary of State, 5 April, 1957.

[16] TNA, CO 554/1583, Minute by Alan Lennox-Boyd, 6 April 1957. For a good account of how Alan Lennox-Boyd performed his office as Colonial Secretary vis-à-vis Britain's transfer of power in Nigeria, see Philip MURPHY, *Alan Lennox-Boyd: A Biography*, London: I.B. Tauris, 1999; and Philip MURPHY, *Party Politics and Decolonisation: The Conservative Party and British Colonial Policy in Tropical Africa, 1951-1964*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

[17] TNA, CO 554/1583, Minute by T.B. Williamson to Secretary of State, 5 April 1957.

[1818] The Lyttelton Constitution was the outcome of the deliberate tinkering undertaken by the Colonial Office in consultation with Nigerian nationalists and essentially based on its perception and understanding of the trends at work in Nigeria. A useful study of the Constitution can be found in Kalu EZERA, *Constitutional Developments in Nigeria*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964.

[19] TNA, CO 554/905, Robertson to Eastwood, 11 June 1956.

[20] *Ibid.*

[21] *Ibid.*

[22] *Ibid*.

independence further. One official noted that it would not be worthwhile to 'risk the forfeiture of Nigeria's goodwill towards us by refusing the present demand for the sake of hanging on for a further three or four years'.[23] It was also realised that the prestige and reputation of the United Kingdom were high in Nigeria at that time and that it would not be in Britain's interest to jeopardize some fundamental interests.[24]

The protection of British interests was one major factor in the capitulation of the Colonial Office on the issue of independence for Nigeria in 1959. Bureaucrats in Church House later agreed that if Britain was to retain her privileges in Nigeria as well as the capacity to influence Nigeria's thinking on international affairs in directions that would favour her, then independence must be conceded to the nationalists.[25] One official did note that nobody who had been acquainted at Colonial Office level with Nigerian affairs could possibly recommend (with equanimity) that Nigeria should be given independence in 1959 or 1960.[26] But the dominant view remained that of Tom B. Williamson, the leading official in charge of Nigerian affairs at the Colonial Office at this time. He argued that if the demand for independence in 1959 was confirmed by the government of Northern Nigeria, it would be extremely difficult and dangerous to resist such demand.[27]

It is, however, important to note that Nigerian politicians themselves had different reasons for demanding self-government in 1959. For instance, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, the leader of the Action Group Party, told Sir James Robertson at the end of April 1957 that 1959 was just a target date to be used as a propaganda tool.[28] On their part, the northern emirs encouraged politicians, and particularly Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, who had been leading the Federal Government since 1957 under the general direction of the British, to support self-government in 1959. The emirs feared that if independence was delayed, they would lose much of their power to the emerging educated class and would not be able to recover their old authority.[29]

At the same time, there was no unanimity within the colonial administration in Nigeria about the desirability of independence for the country in 1959 or early 1960. While Sir James Robertson alerted the Colonial Office to the danger of further delay to self-government for the federation,[30] the governor of the North, Sir Brian Sharwood-Smith, advised delay.[31] To him, while Britain ought to retain the goodwill

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[23] TNA, CO 554/1583, Williamson to Gorell-Barnes, 9 April 1957.
[24] *Ibid.*
[25] *Ibid.*
[26] TNA, CO 554/1583, Minute by Gorell-Barnes to Secretary of State, 9 April 1957.
[27] *Ibid*.
[28] TNA, CO 554/1583, 'Note on a Conversation with Awolowo', in Robertson to Williamson, 23 April 1957.
[29] TNA, CO 554/1583, 'Note on a Conversation with Balewa', in *ibid*.
[30] Sir James Robertson recalled in a post-tenure interview that he told the Colonial Secretary 'in 1958 or 1959 […] that if we did not give independence in 1960, we were going to have a lot of trouble', in A. H. M. KIRK-GREENE (ed.), *The Transfer of Power: The Colonial Administrator in the Age of Decolonisation* (vol. 3), Inter-Faculty Committee, Oxford University, 1979, p. 128.
[31] TNA, CO 554/1596, Sharwood-Smith to Williamson, 14 April 1957.

of Nigerians, what was needed at that time was a delaying action with Her Majesty's Government as umpire, and the means to be provided by the nationalists. In other words, British officials needed no special tactics to pre-empt Nigerian nationalist politicians, considering the inherent and seemingly perpetual conflicts within the nationalists' camp.[32] By mid-1957, the Colonial Office had accepted in principle that federal self-government for Nigeria was a matter that could not be delayed without the acquiescence of Nigerian politicians. Meanwhile, Tafawa Balewa had been found to be the most acceptable 'rallying point for divergent opinions in Nigeria and had thus been pencilled down for the Prime Ministership of Nigeria, if and when independence was eventually granted'[33].

The next round of the controversy, then, centred upon what date would be mutually acceptable to the colonial power and the nationalists. By 1958, pressures were mounting among nationalists for self-government in April 1960. In May 1958, Sir Ralph Grey reported to the Colonial Office that Balewa and some Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) Ministers had become convinced of the need to have independence in April 1960.[34] The new interest in self-government found support and agreement in the position of the Movement for Colonial Freedom in London, which included over 100 MPs. This Movement passed a resolution opposing Britain's rejection of 1959 as date of Nigeria's independence.[35] By the end of May 1958, Balewa was asking the Governor-General to help him look for a 'celebration officer' (i.e. someone to take charge of the planning and arrangement of suitable celebrations) for independence.[36]

Colonial Office bureaucrats, however, remained reluctant to assign a specific date for the attainment of independence by Nigeria. For instance, Maurice Smith, a senior official at the Colonial Office, strongly advised against April 1960 as the date for Nigeria's independence. He gave two major reasons for his objection. The first was that any acceptance of April 1960 would be an embarrassment to Britain's relations with the Central African Federation, apparently, because the Colonial Office was not even contemplating outright independence for the area as of this

[32] The phenomenon of intra-nationalist conflicts has been discussed fully in Olakunle LAWAL, *Britain and the Transfer*, *op. cit.*, pp. 176-201.

[33] Sir James Robertson said that Balewa was 'greatly respected by other parties' and that when the choice of a Prime Minister had to be made, 'the choice was not difficult', in KIRK-GREENE (ed.), *op. cit*., p. 130. See also details of the relationship between Robertson and Balewa in Sir James ROBERTSON, *Transition in Africa From Direct Rule to Independence A Memoir*, London: Hurst, 1974; and Olakunle A. LAWAL, 'Britain's Attitude Towards Alhaji (Sir) Abubakar Tafawa Balewa During the Era of Decolonisation', *Nigerian Forum* (A Publication of the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs), 223, 1993. A most illuminating biography of Alhaji (Sir) Abubakar Tafawa Balewa can be found in Trevor CLARK, *A Right Honourable Gentleman: The Life and Times of Alhaji, Sir, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa*, Zaria: Huda Huda Publishing House, 1991.

[34] TNA, CO 554/1596, Grey to Eastwood, 8 May 1958.

[35] TNA, CO 554/1596, Helen Bastable (Secretary of the Movement for Colonial Freedom) to Commissioner for the Northern Region, 7 May 1958.

[36] TNA, CO 554/1596, Robertson to Macpherson, 27 May 1958.

time. His second reason was the 'situation in Nigeria itself'[37]: although some progress had been made since 1957, there was little doubt that a federal government at that time was likely to be an uneasy coalition.[38] He compared the situation to that in France where successive coalition governments stayed in office only as long as they were able to avoid any decisive action that might offend the interest of at least one of their diverse components. Smith also cited disorder in the East and the West and the permanent threat of troubles in the North as evidence of Nigeria's unpreparedness for self-rule. To him, the Eastern regional government of Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe was perhaps the most 'inept display of regional government yet seen in Nigeria, while the Northern government still hangs almost entirely on the vain and unreliable Premier. Only in the West does government appear to be competent and stable'.[39] Furthermore, Britain's Cabinet was reluctant to grant independence because it feared that the expansion of the Commonwealth might lead to the creation of an Afro-Asian bloc within the organisation itself.[40] Nigeria, if it became independent, would tip the numerical balance in favour of the Afro-Asian group.[41] Consideration was also given to the need to address the feeling of the old Commonwealth, particularly South Africa, about such enlargement.[42]

In spite of the reservations outlined above, Britain was left with little or no choice but to agree that Nigeria would become independent in 1960. In fact, Sir Ralph Grey informed Sir John Macpherson in June 1958 that political facts in Nigeria indicated that 'the real power to determine the pace of events has in fact passed from us to the local people and […] that attempts made to persuade them to a slower pace would be misunderstood and merely result in a loss of goodwill.'[43] By mid-1958, there were indications that the Colonial Office had given up the struggle[44] against independence in 1960 and the Cabinet agreed, provided that essential constitutional and military safeguards were guaranteed.[45] In March 1959, the Colonial Secretary wrote to the Lord Chancellor, Viscount Kilmuir, who was also the Chairman of the Legislative Committee of the British parliament, asking for agreement to authorize the Parliamentary Council to draft the necessary Bill on Nigerian Independence.[46] In July 1959, the Colonial Office commenced the drafting of the Nigerian Independence Bill.[47] Once a decision was taken in the Colonial Office, some attempts were made to prepare for physical imperial disengagement.

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[37] TNA, CO 554/1596, Minute by Maurice Smith to A. Emmanuel and C. G. Eastwood, 15 May 1958.
[38] *Ibid.*
[39] *Ibid.*
[40] TNA, PREM 11/2436, Minute, Cabinet Meeting, 11 September 1958.
[41] *Ibid.* Some of these countries included India, Australia, Canada, Pakistan, Ceylon, the Federation of West Indies, Bangladesh.
[42] *Ibid.*
[43] TNA, CO 554/1958, Grey to Macpherson, 24 June 1958.
[44] In 1958 for instance, Alan Lennox-Boyd informed the British Cabinet that outside the Western Region, there was no evidence of Nigerians being capable of running their own affairs well enough. See TNA, CO 554/1958, Memorandum by the Secretary of State to the British Cabinet, July 1958.
[45] TNA, PREM 11/2436, Minute, Cabinet meeting, 11 September 1958.
[46] TNA, CO 554/1610, Macleod to Viscount Kilmuir, 3 March 1960.
[47] TNA, CO 554/1610, Minute by Barder to Smith, 23 July 1959.

Preparation for outright independence meant the formalization of Nigeria's membership of international organizations and the establishment of diplomatic offices in major political and economic capitals of the world.

Britain's foreign policy legacies for Nigeria on the eve of independence

As part of the general preparation of Nigeria for independence, Britain took steps to train some Nigerians in the art of practical diplomacy by attaching such individuals to the Foreign Office in London and sending some of them to the University of Oxford for training. Some were also posted to important political and economic capitals for affiliation to British Missions. From 1958, some forty Nigerian public officers commenced training in anticipation of the first diplomatic posts to be established after independence. One such training centre outside the United Kingdom was Washington D.C., where one Reginald Barrett, a British official heading the Nigerian liaison Office, an autonomous arm of the British Embassy in the United States, supervised the exercise.[48] The Nigerian officers were trained in the vagaries of diplomatic procedures, protocol, international relations and their social usage. The British government also arranged with United States officials from the State Department to give lectures and discuss practical problems with the trainees. Some also took regular courses in 'African Issues in International Relations' at the John Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies.[49] They spent some time in New York to observe the United Nations, serving as members of the British delegation.[50] These men were to form the core of Nigeria's first set of career diplomats, trained along the lines of western, and especially British, diplomatic traditions. It is, however, important to note that these were part of the general preparations for self-government for Nigeria (not independence), at least a decade or so from 1956-57. The nationalists simply seized the initiatives and accelerated the process beyond the imagination of British officials.

Nigeria's post-independence foreign policy became a campaign issue in the elections that were organized in 1959, before independence. The character of Nigeria's post-independence foreign policy could no longer be ignored by the Nigerian political parties. In January 1959, therefore, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa asked his secretary, Peter Stallard, to request the schedule officer in the Foreign Office, S. J. Fingland, to produce for him, on a personal basis, a note on the foreign policy of an independent Nigeria. This seemingly simple invitation provided an opportunity for colonial officials to influence the thinking of the federal Prime Minister on foreign affairs on the eve of independence.[51] Significantly, another official, A. E. Emmanuel, noted that Balewa's request

[48] See TNA, CO 554/1554 for details of the proposals for the training of Nigerians for career posts in the diplomatic service. See also Vernon MCKAY, *The Rise of Africa in World Politics*, New York: Macfadden Books, 1964, p. 154.
[49] V. MCKAY, *op.cit.*, p. 156.
[50] *Ibid.*
[51] TNA, CO 554/2059, Snelling to Fingland, 19 January 1959.

> *seems to offer to us a most unique opportunity to exert a favourable influence on the minds of Nigerian Ministers in foreign policy matters in the first few years of independence. We have been thinking of how to use this opportunity to the best advantage and we think that if our advice is to make the strongest impact it should come from the Governor-General rather than in the form of an informed note by Fingland.*[52]

Thus, the Colonial Office, with due consultation with the Foreign Office, embarked upon a rigorous attempt to shape Nigeria's post-independence foreign policy from early 1959 until the final disengagement in 1960.

S. J. Fingland suggested the following broad policy outlines which Britain should encourage Nigeria to pursue after 1960.[53] First, Nigeria should not be encouraged to pursue a policy of 'neutralism' in the Cold War politics of the post-1945 era. The ostensible reason for this suggestion was that 'neutrals were not always able to control their degree of neutrality and may find themselves supporting a far from neutral interest', and that in any case, neutrals 'could not escape involvement in the event of a thermonuclear war because many of them would be as dead as combatants'. Above all, neutralism was found to be morally unjustifiable while "practical politics' would not permit any such policy.[54]

Second, Nigeria's most important relationship should be her close and fundamental tie with the United Kingdom and her position as an independent constitutional monarchy within the Commonwealth of Nations. This was to encourage Nigeria to search for and support those countries whose policies were animated by the same belief as her own.[55] On her part, Britain appointed a man of Cabinet rank, Lord Head, who was previously Secretary of State for War (1951-56) and also Minister for Defence (1956-57), as the first High Commissioner to Nigeria. This, in the words of a top official of the Colonial Office, 'showed the importance attached by the UK to the post'.[56] It is also important to note that S.J.G. Fingland found it desirable to 'formally cast off his "adviser"'s hat and don, publicly, [his] U.K. one in preparation for the opening of the High Commission Office on the 1st of October'[57]

Third, Nigeria should seek countries whose attitudes to basic human values and free institutions she could respect because they were in large measure identical to her own. It was specifically stated that Nigeria should particularly aim to retain and expand her existing ties of friendship with the United States.[58]

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[52] TNA, CO 554/2059, Minute by Emmanuel to Allen, n. d.
[53] TNA, CO 554/2059, Suggested Outlines of Foreign Policy of an independent Nigeria, January 1959.
[54] *Ibid*.
[55] *Ibid.*
[56] TNA, CO 554/2554, C. G. Eastwood to D. Williams, 7 July 1960.
[57] TNA, CO 554/2554, Gardner-Brown to C. G. Eastwood, 4 August 1960.
[58] *Ibid.*

Fourth, although it was suggested that Nigeria should condemn racism, she was also enjoined to refuse to 'pillory' her friends publicly or to join forces with other countries in denigrating them in, for instance, the United Nations.[59] This suggestion might explain why Nigeria later spurned the call by the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to sever diplomatic relations with Britain over the Unilateral Declaration of Independence by Rhodesia in November 1965.

Fifth, it was suggested that in her African policies, Nigeria should avoid friendship with radical countries and be 'careful of Nasser's design to dominate Africa'.[60] Nigeria should be suspicious of any form of Pan-Africanism which could lead its followers to accept, consciously or unconsciously, the domination of outside influence and thus to fall into a worse form of 'colonialism' than they had ever known. In the same vein, no West African Federation should be allowed to break Nigeria's friendship with other countries such as the United Kingdom or with the Commonwealth. Significantly, the outline also suggested that Nigeria's foreign policy after independence would be better with the 'free world' in order to harness and develop—through foreign capital—her vast potentialities.[61] It is interesting to note that a number of actions taken by the Balewa government really followed this suggestion. For instance, African liberation, which was expected to be a major focus of Nigeria's African policy, received a rather lukewarm attitude from the Balewa administration—although in the short term, Nigeria championed the expulsion of South Africa from the Commonwealth in 1961.[62] In 1962, the Nigerian government refused military training facilities to the liberation movements from Angola, just as at the 1961 Monrovia Conference of African states, Balewa had warned against 'indiscriminate aid' to the liberation movements. In the same manner, against the 1963 date fixed by the All-African Peoples Organization for the independence of all colonial territories, Nigeria moved a motion in the United Nations that set 1970 as the target date for their independence. In fact, *The Economist* rightly opined in 1961 that Abubakar had a more hesitant approach to African unity than Dr. Kwame Nkrumah and this explained their divergent positions on the subject in the run-up to the formation of the OAU in 1963.[63] In 1960, the Prime Minister had taken a tour of West Africa and met the leaders of Ghana, Togo, Sierra Leone and the Ivory Coast. After talking to Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa about his trip, Sir James Robertson, the outgoing Governor-General, reported that

> *[Balewa] had enjoyed meeting M. Houphouet Boigny and found him not only pleasant but held similar views to his own. He does not disguise his dislike of Dr. Nkrumah, and his suspicion of M. Sekou Toure, though he was pleased to discover, in conversation with M. Sekou Toure, that the latter shared his dislike of Dr. Nkrumah. The Prime Minister seems bent on forming a group of states in West Africa with similar ideas, who can*

[59] *Ibid.*
[60] *Ibid.*
[61] *Ibid.*
[62] See Ronald HYAM, *Britain's Declining Empire: The Road to Decolonisation, 1918-1968*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 319-321.
[63] *The Economist*, 7 October 1961.

> *counter Dr. Nkrumah's influence, and work together for economic, social and cultural rapprochement, rather than for the formation of a closer union.*[64]

It can then be seen that although Balewa was tutored by the British on a preferred direction of an African policy, it was clear from the onset that he had his own preferences and idiosyncrasies as to what road Nigeria should tread on Pan-African matters. In fact, in spite of the admonition of the British that Nigeria should play down on the idea of African unity, Balewa declared: "We belong to Africa and Africa must claim first mention in our external affairs".[65] The British were conscious of this tendency. J. O. Moreton, a senior official at the British High Commission in Nigeria, wrote to the Colonial Office confirming the sentiments already identified with Balewa at independence: 'I have always said that Nigerians are Africans first and foremost and that their foreign policy would be dictated primarily by their relations with other African countries. The Commonwealth and Britain come some way behind'.[66] The implication of this was that once the Nigerian nationalist politicians assumed power, they were more inclined to toe an independent line.

Sixth, British concerns centred on Nigeria's attitude towards the Soviet Union in a post-colonial era. Nigeria was advised against any close dealings with the Soviet Union, 'which had a sinister record of promoting subversion in other countries, especially through the formation of local communist parties'.[67] She was to be discouraged from any immediate exchange of diplomatic representation with the Soviet Union or with other Iron Curtain countries.[68] By August 1959, the Nigerian Federal Prime Minister was ready to implement this particular recommendation as he asked Fingland how he could counter Russian advances or diplomatic relations without yielding any ground.[69] This suggestion appeared to have been well taken. In the words of Oye Ogunbadejo, Balewa 'held tenaciously to the western values he had inherited from the British'.[70] According to him, Balewa's perception of and attitude towards the Soviet Union was a result of his devoutly religious disposition to many issues. In 'a normative approach to foreign relations', his foreign policy was clear cut: 'either support the West and be in good and respectable company, or support the communist and be in the company of evil'.[71] Obviously the Prime Minister took the admonition of the British to heart in his dealings with the Soviet Union during the early years of Nigeria's independence. Although the Soviets were invited to Nigeria's independence celebrations, Balewa told the delegation that

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[64] This view by Tafawa Balewa can be found in TNA, DO 177/12, Robertson to Permanent Under-Secretary of State, September 1960. Also see Olajide ALUKO, *Ghana and Nigeria: A Study in Inter-African Discord*, London: Barnes and Noble, 1978, p. 64.
[65] In *ibid*., p. 88.
[66] TNA, DO 177/12, Moreton to V. C. Martin, 17 October 1961.
[67] TNA, DO 177/12, 'Draft Confidential Annex on Nigerian Foreign Policy After Independence', n. d.
[68] *Ibid*.
[69] TNA, DO 177/12, cited by Allen in his letter to Gallagher, 5 August 1959.
[70] See Oye OGUNBADEJO, 'Ideology and Pragmatism: The Soviet Role in Nigeria, 1960-1977', *Orbis*, vol. 25, n° 4, 1978.
[71] *Ibid*.

Nigeria was interested only in economic, not political, relations.[72] This disguised hostility was only abandoned by the Nigerian government in the late 1960s when the realities of the civil war brought it home to the Nigerian authorities that there could only be permanent interests but not permanent friends in international relations.[73]

However, much as Balewa appeared rather patronizing and ever-willing to do the wish of the British government, local opinion and domestic politics also influenced his attitude towards some of the emergent issues of a diplomatic nature in the early years of independence. Balewa was particularly aware of domestic public opinion: he complained to the British High Commissioner in 1961 about criticism in the press and political parties that the country, even after independence, was being run by the British. For Balewa, 'all these accusations in the press and by word of mouth are rubbish and the people who believe them are either trouble-makers or ignorant.'[74] It would appear that in spite of the strenuous effort on the part of Britain to implant her interest in the official and sub-conscious minds of Nigerian decision-makers on the eve of independence, officials and the political class missed no opportunity to repudiate this pro-British attitude immediately after political independence was granted.

The Anglo-Nigerian Defence Agreement

The responsibility for Nigerian defence policy, as was the case of foreign affairs, was exercised by Britain until 1960. As was the case with the broad outlines of Nigeria's foreign policy after independence, Britain's officials took considerable interest in the prospects of an Anglo-Nigerian defence agreement on the eve of independence. Indeed, the idea of a defence agreement was first mooted during the 1958 constitutional conference in London by the British Defence Minister.[75] He emphasized the importance of avoiding any uncertainty about the defence facilities which Britain would need to retain in Nigeria to reinforce the Middle Eastern and Far Eastern theatres. Moreover, the strategic importance of Nigeria was sufficiently great to Britain to justify her making every effort to retain an enclave of territory in Nigeria which could be under her own sovereignty.[76] However, the Cabinet agreed at a later meeting to leave out the demand for a reserve military base because of the 'absence of a suitable coastal site'.[77]

Although it is possible to argue that the nationalist politicians were coerced into signing the defence agreement since the idea became a sine qua non to the grant

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[72] A concise discussion about the fortunes of Soviet relations with Nigeria has been discussed by J. B. OJO, 'Nigeria and Soviet Relations: Retrospect and Prospect', *African Studies Review*, vol. 19, n° 3, 1976.

[73] Even after the civil war, the first country visited by the Nigerian Head of State, General Yakubu Gowon, was Britain. In a way, this was meant to show that 'despite Biafra there had not been any fundamental change in Anglo-Nigerian relations', see J. B. OJO, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

[74] See TNA, DO 177/12, Lord Head to Sir Alexander Clutterbuck, 17 January 1961.

[75] Cited in TNA, CO 554/2059.

[76] *Ibid.*

[77] TNA, CO 554/2059, Extract from the conclusion of a Cabinet Meeting, 12 October 1958.

of self-government,[78] it should be noted that all the sections of Nigeria's ruling elite were aware of Britain's interest in securing a defence agreement with Nigeria. In fact, Balewa recalled that when the British ministers first mooted the idea of having a military base for the Royal Air Force in Kano, he suggested that the base should be established elsewhere because Kano was a big commercial town with an international airport. He also recalled that Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe and Chief Obafemi Awolowo agreed that the British could have the base anywhere in the East or West.[79] In fact, they all initialled the heads of the agreement and also agreed that if the United Kingdom was in any trouble, Nigeria would regard herself as being obliged to help the British.[80] To avoid any doubt, Balewa assured the Colonial Secretary, Alan Lennox-Boyd, that even if any of the other party leaders had second thoughts, permission for the United Kingdom would be available.[81] Thus, in September 1958, the British Cabinet agreed to grant independence to Nigeria provided that the essential constitutional and military safeguards were guaranteed.[82] Although the Defence Minister favoured an agreement that would be part of the total package of self-government, the Cabinet finally considered that the agreement might prove more reliable and command greater international respect if, on the Malayan precedent, it was signed, or at least ratified, by Nigeria after she attained independence.[83] The major reason for this was the desire to allow Nigerians to sign the document freely after independence. In fact, Sir James Robertson warned the Colonial Secretary in mid-September 1959, based on evidence from Cyprus, that too many claims without the goodwill of the locals would not be enforceable.

There were two major provisions in the defence agreement: (1) 'Staging and over flying rights for British aircrafts, together with the right to use the harbours at Lagos and Port Harcourt in case of war; and (2) reserving sovereignty in perpetuity over a small enclave of Nigerian territory which would provide a secure and permanent base for British forces'.[84] The agreement also enabled Nigerian military

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[78] Both Chief Awolowo (the leader of the Action Group Party) and Dr. Azikiwe (then President of the Nigerian Senate and leader of the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons) denied ever signing the agreement but only a draft which they expected the Government of the Federation to renegotiate anyway. Indeed, Chief Awolowo declared a few months later that Nigerian leaders 'were bundled to 10 Downing Street and were asked to initial this document on the understanding that unless this document was initialed, it would not be possible for Her Majesty's Government to make a declaration fixing a date for our independence'. See The *Hansards*, Nigerian House of Representatives Debates, November 1960, p. 61. For the controversy over the background and the secret nature of the negotiation that led to the signing of the Defence Pact, see the seminal essay by Gordon J. IDANG, 'The Politics of Nigerian Foreign Policy: The Ratification and Renunciation of the Anglo-Nigerian Defence Agreement', *African Studies Review*, vol. 13, n° 2, 1970. Details of the individual reactions and denials by the different political personalities connected with the agreement can be found in *The Daily Times* (Lagos), 4 May 1960; *The West African Pilot*, 21 February 1960; and *Nigerian Tribune*, 4 May 1960.

[79] TNA, CO 554/2059, Grey to Eastwood, 16 September 1958.

[80] *Ibid.*

[81] TNA, CO 554/2122, Lennox-Boyd to Macpherson, 24 September 1958.

[82] TNA, PREM 11/2436, Minute of Meeting, 11 September 1958.

[83] TNA, CO 554/1548, Extract from the conclusions of a Cabinet Meeting, 22 October 1958.

[84] TNA, CO 554/1548, Extract from the conclusions of a Cabinet Meeting, 11 September 1958.

personnel to be trained in Britain and to secure modern military equipment from Britain. In return, Nigeria was to provide the British with a base in Kano, port facilities in Lagos and Port Harcourt, while British military personnel were to enjoy special privileges. In the end, an amended version of the Defence Agreement was ratified by the Nigerian Parliament after a brief debate in 1961. But the vehemence of the opposition to the Defence Pact finally robbed it of a long existence. It was eventually abrogated by mutual consent in January 1962 on the eve of the Conference of African Heads of States and Governments in Lagos. In its place, a new agreement in principle, which enjoined the two governments to 'endeavour to afford to each other at all times such assistance and facilities in defence matters as are appropriate between partners in the Commonwealth', was instituted.[85] While the British were able to secure a bilateral military agreement with Nigeria immediately after independence,[86] the Pact suffered from fits and falls in its implementation before it was eventually abrogated in 1962.[87] .

Two examples of this suffice here. First, the Minister of Defence, Mohammadu Ribadu, vehemently refused to allow senior British military officers to visit and participate in some military exercise, in spite of the Anglo-Nigerian Defence Agreements. Second, an unidentified Nigerian official in Ethiopia told the British High Commissioner to Nigeria in no uncertain terms that the Ethiopian Government was getting aid from all directions without being tied to the apron strings of any of the donors. In essence, whilst Nigerian officials were ready and willing to accept aid from as many quarters as were willing to donate, they were not ready to be tied to the apron strings of such donors.[88] This anti-British feeling and attitude, which were hardly hidden in the immediate post-independence years, would appear to have permeated almost all the sectors of the Nigerian government. Even Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, who was an anglophile and was always willing to pander to the interests of the British, had occasions to disagree with them. Within three months of independence, Balewa was exhibiting some reluctance in allowing the full implementation of the Anglo-Nigerian Defence Agreements—prompting the British High Commissioner to Nigeria, Lord Head, to pour out his frustration and embarrassment to Sir Alexander Clutterbuck, the Permanent Under-Secretary of State at the Commonwealth Relations Office, in January 1961:

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[85] *The London Times*, 22 January 1962.

[86] In this regard, Chief Awolowo was to note rightly 'that the military pact was not genuinely abrogated' and that 'there was a secret understanding of an equally sinister nature as the original Pact itself'; see *The (Nigerian) Morning Post*, 3 February 1962 and House of Representatives Debate, March-April, 1962, pp. 397-399.

[87] Two examples of the official problems which the Defence Pact faced in its implementation can be given here: (1) The unhelpful attitude of Muhammadu Ribadu, the Defence Minister, according to Moreton at the British High Commission in Lagos (TNA, DO 177/12, J. O. Moreton to V. C. Martin, 17 October 1961); and (2) the reluctance of Balewa himself to allow the full implementation of the Defence Pact in 1961, which prompted the British High Commissioner to Nigeria, Lord Head, to retort that 'I told him that an agreement was an agreement and […] we were rather upset that so early in the day a facility which was included in the agreement should be denied to us' (TNA, DO 177/12, Lord Head to the Permanent Under-Secretary of State, 18 January 1961).

[8888] Cited in TNA DO 177/12, Lord Head to Sir Alexander Clutterbuck, 18 January 1961.

> *I went and saw the Prime Minister this morning and discussed […] the arrangements for tropical testing [of] Naval fighter under the Defence Agreement. I said that we fully appreciated the embarrassment and difficulties which had been caused to the Government by the misrepresentation of the Defence Pact and the agitation which had taken place in the press and elsewhere. Nevertheless an agreement was an agreement and we were rather upset that so early in the day a facility which was included in the agreement should be denied to us.*[89]

Conclusion

In analysing Britain's effort at constructing a foreign policy for Nigeria on the eve of independence, it is important to note that contrary to the conventional view that Nigeria swallowed all the advice and admonitions which Britain offered, Nigeria, as a country, tried to chart her own independence course. Some evidence does suggest that the legacies which Britain sought to leave for Nigeria showed in some of the foreign policy initiatives and acts which the Balewa government carried out—and some of the positions taken presented Nigeria as a stooge of Britain and the West. But some diplomatic decisions also ran contrary to the preferences of the British. Interpretations based on extreme anglophilism essentially prevailed before files were declassified after 1990 and a reconsideration of Nigerian foreign policy in the incipient years of independence has become all too necessary.

As some of the information above would seem to suggest, the realities of Nigeria's domestic opinion and the vagaries of international politics in the period under consideration did in fact influence the extent to which Nigerian leaders could be susceptible to manipulation by the British in the early years of independence. Indeed, the voice of British diplomat J. O. Moreton graphically captures the mood and temperament of the 'new Nigeria' in 1961 within both official and unofficial circles, as well as the evolution of Nigerian foreign policy vis-à-vis the expectations of her erstwhile colonial masters:

> *[…] the fairly universal theme running through Nigerian political thinking, that they should become less dependent on Britain is I think a permanent and not necessarily in the long run, an unhealthy one. It does not mean any falling away in personal friendliness. But it does mean we must never take for granted Nigerian support or sympathy on any issue and it may mean that we should be somewhat less obtrusive in our relations with them and above all avoid any impression that we have some proprietary rights here. […] I suggest it is all part of the current mood of disengagement and the desire to demonstrate that Nigerians no longer need to dance to the tune of a British department, albeit a different one from the colonial days.*[90]

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[89] *Ibid*.
[90] TNA, DO 177/12, J. O. Moreton to V. C. Martin, 17 October 1961.

This, in a nutshell, can be described as the fortune that befell Britain's aspiration in an independent Nigeria, where the politicians seemed to have played along until independence, before allowing the force of public opinion and the general anti-British feeling to take over their pre-independence pro-British attitude.

In the final analysis, while the British undertook decolonisation in a conscious manner and with the belief and interest in maintaining a reasonable amount of continuity in the direction of socio-economic and political developments in Nigeria, the reality in the immediate post-independence years was the contrary. Dennis Austin has rightly noted that part of Britain's success in transferring political power was her belief in continuity.[91] This was true as far as the implantation of the structures of governance was concerned. Certainly, it seems that the British did succeed in nurturing Nigeria in the niceties of British diplomatic preferences and tradition… only to the extent that the training and attitude of Nigerian politicians reflected this mentoring in the first few months of independence. Available evidence points out that the force of public opinion as well as the desire of Nigerian politicians to prove that they were not stooges of Britain decided their attitude.

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[91] Dennis AUSTIN, 'Britain's Decolonisation: How and Why?' in W. H. MORRIS JONES & Georges FISCHER (eds.), *Decolonisation and After: The British and French Experience*, London: Frank Cass, 1980, p. 12.

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L'impact de la crise rhodésienne sur les relations entre la Grande-Bretagne et les États africains du Commonwealth

Virginie ROIRON
IEP Strasbourg

Le gouvernement minoritaire blanc de Rhodésie du Sud déclara unilatéralement son indépendance le 11 novembre 1965. Cet acte de rébellion envers la Grande-Bretagne inaugura une période de grande incertitude dans les relations entre la Grande-Bretagne et les États d'Afrique anglophone membres du Commonwealth. Il eut des répercutions bien au-delà des relations « bilatérales » entre la Grande-Bretagne et la Rhodésie dans la mesure où il vint ébranler les fondements de la politique post-coloniale britannique, au cœur de laquelle l'Afrique occupait une position centrale. L'Afrique représentait en effet un enjeu stratégique de taille, un véritable test pour la politique de décolonisation, une sorte de moment de vérité pour l'entreprise post-coloniale. En effet, comment comprendre l'importance de l'Afrique pour la Grande-Bretagne sans replacer la question dans son contexte, à savoir celui du développement d'un Commonwealth où les États africains étaient amenés à constituer un contingent important ? Or c'est toute cette entreprise post-coloniale représentée par le Commonwealth multiracial que la crise de Rhodésie mettait en danger.

La crise de Rhodésie, si elle désigne d'abord une crise politique interne à l'empire britannique, prit une dimension qui dépassa l'enjeu local qu'elle posait, à savoir la question d'un régime politique qui ne se conformait plus aux critères requis pour l'octroi de l'indépendance. Ces critères avaient été définis par la puissance coloniale de manière relativement pragmatique, au fil du développement de sa politique de décolonisation. En revanche, l'intransigeance de la Grande-Bretagne sur les conditions préalables à l'octroi de l'indépendance paraît fortement influencée par un Commonwealth régénéré par le sang neuf des anciennes colonies africaines.

Cet article s'attachera à analyser l'impact de la crise de Rhodésie sur les relations entre la Grande-Bretagne et les États africains du Commonwealth au cours des années 1960. Inaugurée par le départ de l'Afrique du sud du Commonwealth et par les accès massifs aux indépendances, la décennie, qui s'achève sur la conférence des Premiers ministres du Commonwealth de 1969 et la crise du Biafra, voit émerger les États africains en tant qu'acteurs des relations internationales. Il s'agira de montrer que les relations diplomatiques entre la Grande-Bretagne et les États africains du Commonwealth se sont tissées dans la confrontation au sujet de la Rhodésie. La crise de Rhodésie a ainsi changé le rapport de force au sein du Commonwealth et posé les jalons d'une nouvelle attitude britannique et africaine

envers cette association particulière qui ne se définissait pas autrement que par la relation à un passé commun. Cet article entend ainsi analyser la crise profonde que traversèrent les relations entre la Grande-Bretagne et l'Afrique anglophone.

La Rhodésie du Sud, un territoire au statut particulier

La Rhodésie du Sud – l'actuel Zimbabwe – était une colonie britannique fondée par Cecil Rhodes à la fin du XIXe siècle. La particularité de cette colonie est qu'elle ne fut jamais directement soumise à la politique impériale décidée par Londres. Elle fut en effet dirigée par la British South Africa Company jusqu'en 1922, année où le gouvernement britannique donna au territoire le statut de colonie de la Couronne tout en confiant le pouvoir politique aux représentants des ressortissants coloniaux. Il s'agissait bien d'une colonie de la Couronne, et pas d'un dominion[1] comme le Canada, l'Australie, la Nouvelle-Zélande, ou même l'Irlande qui, en 1922, accéda à ce statut de territoire indépendant au sein de l'empire. La Rhodésie demeurait sous la responsabilité ultime de Londres, même si Londres avait délégué le pouvoir politique à la population blanche qui y résidait. Le paragraphe 28 des Lettres Patentes donnait au gouverneur de Rhodésie du Sud un pouvoir de réserve, voire de censure, sur les actes discriminatoires votés par l'assemblée législative[2]. En somme, le gouvernement britannique demeurait responsable, comme dans les autres colonies et conformément à la politique impériale mise en place dans les années 1930, de la population indigène.

Mais très vite, la Grande-Bretagne fut confrontée à un dilemme dans sa relation avec la Rhodésie du Sud. Son statut, à mi-chemin entre colonie et dominion, incitait Londres à traiter la Rhodésie du Sud comme un dominion à part entière, en n'intervenant pas dans ses affaires intérieures, même quand les fondements de la discrimination raciale furent institutionnalisés. Le gouvernement britannique n'envisageait cependant pas de conférer à ce territoire le statut de dominion plein et entier malgré l'invitation régulière des représentants rhodésiens en tant qu'observateurs aux conférences impériales. Les débats sur le vote et la promulgation de la loi sur la répartition des terres (*Land Apportionment Act*) de 1930 tendent à montrer que la question était sensible en Grande-Bretagne. Des amendements de pure forme furent apportés, notamment dans une note manuscrite

[1] Le terme « dominion » n'a pas de définition officielle mais fait référence au statut qui fut accordé au Canada en 1867, même si à l'origine il ne recouvrait pas explicitement le sens qu'il prit avec le temps. Il désigne les territoires de l'empire qui bénéficiaient d'une pleine autonomie de gouvernement avec un législateur représentatif et responsable devant ses électeurs. Le terme fut retenu dans ce sens lors de la conférence impériale de 1907 (David MCINTYRE, *Colonies into Commonwealth*, London: Blandford Press [1966] 1968, pp. 130-131). En 1922, lorsqu'il fut décidé du sort de la Rhodésie du Sud, la définition est sinon officielle, du moins reconnue, et le modèle du dominion du Canada servira de référence la même année pour la constitution de l'État libre d'Irlande. « L'Irlande aura le même statut constitutionnel dans la Communauté des Nations connue sous le nom d'Empire britannique que le Dominion du Canada, le Commonwealth d'Australie, le Dominion de Nouvelle-Zélande et l'Union sud-africaine. » (Traité anglo-irlandais, 6 décembre 1921 – traduction de l'auteur). Un tel statut ne fut pas accordé à la Rhodésie du Sud.

[2] Claire PALLEY, *The Constitutional History and Law of Southern Rhodesia, 1888-1965*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966, p. 237.

où il fut demandé de « bien préciser que de la même façon que les indigènes n'auront pas la permission d'occuper les terres, etc. dans les 'zones' non indigènes proposées, les non indigènes ne seront pas autorisés à faire de même dans les 'zones' indigènes proposées »[3]. L'exercice du devoir de protection des populations indigènes était ainsi réduit au minimum : il n'était question ni du fait que plus de 50 % des terres, et parmi les meilleures, seraient désormais exclusivement réservées à la population blanche, ni du fait que seulement 22 % des terres seraient allouées aux populations indigènes[4]. Si l'attitude britannique est à remettre dans le contexte d'une politique coloniale paternaliste qui trouvait des points de convergence avec les idées exprimées par les représentants à l'assemblée rhodésienne[5], les hésitations entourant la promulgation de la loi sur la répartition des terres révèlent un certain malaise au sein du gouvernement britannique. En effet, en institutionnalisant la ségrégation raciale, le gouvernement rhodésien s'enfermait dans une attitude paternaliste vis-à-vis de la population indigène, ce qui ne l'empêchait pas de lui consacrer plus de dépenses en matière d'éducation, de santé ou d'agriculture que le gouvernement britannique ne le faisait dans ses colonies[6]. D'un autre côté, le gouvernement britannique tendait vers une conception plus ouverte et plus active du rôle des populations indigènes dans l'administration et le développement du territoire, mettant en avant des principes, notamment celui de la primauté des intérêts des populations indigènes tel que l'avait énoncé Lord Passfield en 1930[7] – l'année même de la promulgation de la loi rhodésienne sur la répartition des terres. Le gouvernement britannique semblait bien conscient des limites de ces principes, surtout vis-à-vis des populations blanches présentes sur le continent africain :

> *On ne se rend peut-être pas toujours compte du danger qu'il y a, du point de vue des relations intra-impériales, à constamment revenir sur l'excellence des principes du Royaume-Uni en matière de politique à l'égard des Africains, et de faire de leur adoption une condition préalable aux ajustements qui s'imposent pour des raisons économiques, de défense et autres, quand d'autres communautés, comme en Rhodésie du Sud, n'ont qu'à regarder par-dessus la palissade pour voir par eux-mêmes combien la prétention à la prééminence théorique n'est pas corroborée par ce qui est effectivement pratiqué*[8].

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[3] « The amendment is purely formal, and designed […] to make it clear that, just as the natives will not be permitted to own or occupy land etc. in the proposed non-native 'areas', so non-natives will not be allowed to do so in the proposed native 'areas' », The National Archives (TNA), DO 35/354/3, Mr. Machtig, 25 mars 1930, Traduction de l'auteur.

[4] R. PALMER, *Land and Racial Domination in Rhodesia*, London: Heinemann, 1977, p. 147.

[5] R. GRAY, *The two Nations: aspects of the Development of Race Relations in the Rhodesias and Nyasaland*, London: Oxford University Press, 1960, pp. 48-54.

[6] PALLEY, *op. cit.*, p. 239.

[7] Cmd. 3573, *Memorandum on Native Policy in East Africa*, 1930.

[8] « It is perhaps not always realised how dangerous it is from the point of view of intra-Imperial relations, to harp on the excellence of the United Kingdom principles of policy in relation to Africans, and make their acceptance a condition precedent to adjustments which suggest themselves on economic, defence and other grounds, when other communities such as Southern Rhodesia are in a position to look over the fence and see for themselves how far the

De telles hésitations, tant vis-à-vis des populations indigènes en Afrique que vis-à-vis des populations coloniales autonomes, apparaissent comme les prémisses de l'imbroglio auquel la Grande-Bretagne se trouva confrontée dans la gestion de l'indépendance de ses colonies africaines, Rhodésie du Sud comprise. Le gouvernement britannique se trouva ainsi, malgré ses pouvoirs de réserve, dans une position où il demeurait responsable de la Rhodésie du Sud sans toutefois estimer qu'il avait la légitimité nécessaire pour intervenir contre des décisions prises par des élus de la colonie.

L'importance de l'Afrique dans la politique post-coloniale britannique

Après la Seconde Guerre mondiale, le gouvernement britannique s'employa à donner une cohérence à l'empire, politique qu'il avait amorcée à la fin des années 1930. Désormais, la politique qui avait prévalu pour les colonies de peuplement blanc, à savoir une progression vers l'autonomie de gouvernement et l'indépendance au sein du Commonwealth, allait être appliquée aux autres territoires de l'empire. Traiter les colonies africaines de la même façon que les autres territoires impériaux devait permettre de garder une sphère d'influence post-coloniale. C'est dans cette perspective que le gouvernement britannique choisit de suivre les recommandations du rapport Hailey, qui préconisait la fin de la politique du gouvernement indirect et la responsabilisation des Africains instruits et acquis aux valeurs de la civilisation britannique :

> *L'impact de la civilisation européenne sur l'Afrique de l'ouest est en train de provoquer des changements rapides dans de nombreuses directions, et plus le temps passe, plus les groupes d'Africains instruits, peu nombreux mais en plein essor, sont susceptibles de développer une conscience politique, et il serait plus satisfaisant que les gouvernements concernés soient, dans une certaine mesure, préparées en amont afin d'être dans la position d'initier les changements dans cette bonne direction (quelle que soit la direction qui sera finalement définie comme étant la bonne) plutôt que de se voir forcés dans la position de céder du terrain aux exigences des démagogues*[9].

La décolonisation du continent n'était cependant pas envisagée à court terme, mais dans le cadre d'un processus de longue haleine visant à mener à bien la

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claim to pre-eminence in theory is unsubstantiated by actual performance. » TNA, CO 795/122, Pt I/45104, *Notes on Future policy in Central Africa*, G. F. Seel, avril 1943.

[9] « The impact of European civilisation upon West Africa is producing rapid changes in various directions and the small but increasing groups of educated Africans are likely to become more politically-minded as time goes on and it would be more satisfactory if the Governments concerned were to some extent prepared in advance so that they would be in a position to initiate changes in this right direction (whatever direction may eventually be decided to be the right one) rather than allow themselves to be forced into the position of making cessions to the demand of demagogues. » TNA, CO 847/13/16, Report by Lord Hailey: *An African Survey*, 1938.

politique de développement qui ferait des futurs États africains et de leurs représentants des alliés loyaux de la Grande-Bretagne, même après l'indépendance.

En 1948, Arthur Creech-Jones, ministre des Colonies, présentait le transfert du pouvoir politique aux peuples africains comme l'émanation d'une initiative britannique : « notre première tâche en Afrique en ce qui concerne la population est de stimuler son initiative, de faire ce qui peut être fait par des représentants gouvernementaux pour encourager les gens à vouloir le changement et les doter du pouvoir de créer eux-mêmes le changement. »[10] L'Afrique, continent longtemps négligé, devint ainsi le centre des préoccupations de la politique coloniale britannique, qui n'envisageait pas l'indépendance immédiate mais qui entendait préparer les territoires au transfert du pouvoir politique sur le long terme. Toutefois, une telle politique n'était pas sans conséquence sur le statut des colons en Afrique, ainsi que l'avait souligné en 1946 Andrew Cohen, principal conseiller de Creech-Jones : « Nous sommes dans les faits arrivés à la fin de la période pendant laquelle nous pouvions nous appuyer sur le prestige de l'homme blanc pour gouverner l'Afrique. »[11] Dans le même temps, les territoires d'Asie du Sud obtinrent le statut de dominion et furent admis au sein du Commonwealth, à égalité avec les dominions blancs. Les fondements institutionnels du Commonwealth lui-même furent profondément modifiés avec, en 1949, la Déclaration de Londres et l'admission de la République indienne.

Cette modification équivalait à une petite révolution puisque les membres du Commonwealth n'étaient désormais plus unis par le lien institutionnel que représentait la couronne, à laquelle ils devaient prêter allégeance, mais seulement par des valeurs communes, à commencer par un rejet du colonialisme, qui se muera par la suite en défense de l'égalité raciale provoquant le départ de l'Afrique du Sud. Dans ce cadre, l'adhésion à des valeurs était primordiale pour l'avenir d'une entreprise, le Commonwealth, que la Grande-Bretagne avait essentiellement conçue comme la continuation de la politique impériale par d'autres moyens[12].

Dans ce contexte, la question de l'Afrique devint centrale. Si la décolonisation africaine était vue comme une échéance à très long terme, la montée des nationalismes obligea la Grande-Bretagne à raccourcir les délais. Le Ghana représenta un test pour la politique coloniale : après les émeutes de 1948, le gouvernement britannique soutint Kwame Nkrumah après la victoire de son parti aux élections de 1951[13] et entama en 1954 le processus de transition vers

[10] « our primary task in Africa in relation to the people is to stimulate their initiative, to do what can be done by Government officers to encourage people to want change and to equip them with the power themselves to create change. » TNA, CO 852/1053/1, n° 18, Opening address to the summer conference—Cambridge by Mr Creech-Jones (CSC (48)13), 18 août 1948.

[11] « We are in fact at the end of the period during which we could rely on the White man's prestige to govern Africa. » TNA, CO 847/35/6 n° 2, *Native administration policy: Notes for further discussion*, A. B. Cohen, 3 avril 1946.

[12] TNA, CAB 134/786, The Future of the Commonwealth Membership, Report by the Official Committee, 21 January 1954, SECRET, C.C.M. (54)1.

[13] T. FALOLA & A. D. ROBERTS, "West Africa", in J. BROWN & R. Wm. LOUIS, *The Oxford History of the British Empire,* Vol. 4, *The Twentieth Century*, Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 524.

l'indépendance qui fut effective en 1957. Toutefois, même raccourci, ce délai ne résistait pas aux pressions des nationalismes africains, notamment sous celle du mouvement panafricain international mené par le même Nkrumah. En ce sens, du point de vue britannique, l'indépendance du Ghana ne se soldait pas par un succès[14] dans la mesure où Nkrumah n'eut de cesse, après l'indépendance, de condamner l'ancienne puissance coloniale, malgré son adhésion volontaire au Commonwealth.

À partir de 1960, la phase de préparation fut abandonnée en faveur d'une politique d'octroi immédiat de l'indépendance. Ce changement de politique pouvait s'expliquer par la volonté de se conformer à un mouvement jugé inévitable, comme le constatera Harold Macmillan dans ses discours sur le « vent du changement » prononcés au Ghana puis en Afrique du Sud en 1960. En outre, le Commonwealth apparaissait comme une sorte de filet de sauvetage : il permettait dans une certaine mesure à la Grande-Bretagne de garder des liens privilégiés avec les anciens territoires de l'empire, voire de maintenir les anciens territoires de l'empire sous influence, pour contenir l'expansion du bloc de l'Est dans le contexte de la Guerre froide ou pour préserver un poids sur la scène internationale. Si l'évolution du Ghana après son indépendance semblait remettre en question la conception britannique du Commonwealth, Londres semblait miser sur la concurrence entre États africains pour parvenir à ses fins : « Nkrumah est notre ennemi […] En tant que blancs, nous ne pouvons envisager de le combattre ouvertement en Afrique. Donc, nous devons trouver des noirs qui puissent le faire ; et s'il serait contreproductif de les vouer à l'échec en leur donnant notre bénédiction coloniale, nous sommes cependant capables de suffisamment d'ingéniosité pour trouver des moyens efficaces de leur offrir un soutien discret et légitime. »[15] La volonté des nouveaux États africains de rejoindre le Commonwealth semblait confirmer le succès général de la politique de décolonisation, nonobstant le problème ghanéen. Ainsi, de 1957 à 1960, le Ghana était le seul membre africain du Commonwealth, avec l'Afrique du Sud. En 1966, onze États africains étaient devenus membres, donnant à l'Afrique une place centrale au sein du Commonwealth.

Tableau 1 : Évolution du poids de l'Afrique au sein du Commonwealth

	Membres africains du Commonwealth (hors Afrique du Sud)	Nombre total de membres du Commonwealth	Pourcentage de membres africains
1961	2 membres	13 membres	15 %
1966	11 membres	23 membres	48 %
1969	12 membres	29 membres	41 %
1971	12 membres	32 membres	37 %

[14] R. Wm. LOUIS, "The Dissolution of the British Empire", in BROWN & LOUIS, *op. cit.*, p. 349.

[15] « Nkrumah is our enemy […] We, being white, cannot hope to fight him openly in Africa. Ergo: we must find blacks who can; and although it would be counterproductive to damn them with our old colonial kiss, yet surely it is not beyond our ingenuity to find effective ways of affording them discreet and legitimate support. » TNA, FO 371/176507, Russell à Butler, 31 décembre 1963 in *ibid.,* p. 349.

Dans le même temps, l'Afrique du Sud de l'apartheid quittait le Commonwealth, au grand regret du gouvernement britannique[16] dont la première préoccupation était de préserver l'unité du Commonwealth, et ce dernier fut définit pour la première fois comme une association multiraciale dans le communiqué final de la Conférence des Premiers ministres de 1960. Les années 1960 furent une période d'activité intense pour le Commonwealth, qui ne connut pas moins d'un sommet par an de 1960 à 1965, et deux pour la seule année 1966. Cette sorte de frénésie consultative était révélatrice de la volonté du gouvernement britannique d'associer Commonwealth et processus de décolonisation et de faire vivre un lien nécessairement distendu au sein d'une association dont le nombre de membres augmenta de manière spectaculaire en quelques années.

La décolonisation de la Rhodésie : un dilemme insurmontable pour la Grande-Bretagne

L'influence des membres africains et la sortie de l'Afrique du Sud finirent par centrer l'attention du Commonwealth sur le cas de la Rhodésie du Sud. En effet, alors que ses voisins devenaient indépendants, le gouvernement rhodésien, pourtant déjà autonome, ne parvenait pas à arracher à la Grande-Bretagne une indépendance qu'il estimait mériter, compte tenu de la nature relativement démocratique du gouvernement, si on ne prenait en compte que la population blanche, et du degré de développement économique du territoire.

Les nouveaux États africains s'emparèrent du sujet, obligeant la Grande-Bretagne à rendre des comptes au sujet d'une politique qui relevait de sa propre souveraineté. La Grande-Bretagne avait toujours refusé d'aborder les questions relatives à la décolonisation devant le Commonwealth, puisque ce dernier représentait la phase suivante, post-coloniale. Toutefois, le Commonwealth devait se prononcer sur l'entrée des nouveaux membres. Si la Rhodésie entendait demander son adhésion au Commonwealth, les conditions de son indépendance devaient *de facto* recueillir l'accord des membres de l'association. Une telle tentative risquait de déboucher sur une impasse à la sud-africaine, à cette différence près que la Grande-Bretagne étant responsable de la Rhodésie, un débat sur l'entrée de cette dernière dans le Commonwealth aurait directement associé le gouvernement britannique à la politique rhodésienne condamnée par la plupart membres. Pour inconfortable que fût le *statu quo*, c'est le choix par défaut que finit par faire le gouvernement britannique :

> *L'octroi de l'indépendance a des attraits superficiels en ce que nous pourrions nous laver les mains de notre responsabilité pour tout ce qui concerne la Rhodésie du sud. Mais l'accorder sur le fondement des définitions actuelles du droit de vote et du pouvoir législatif attirerait au gouvernement de Sa Majesté, au sein des Nations-Unies, du Commonwealth et ailleurs, autant, si ce n'est plus, de critiques que sous*

[16] TNA, PREM 11/3535.

> *le régime des dispositions constitutionnelles en vigueur qui nous donnent la responsabilité mais pas le pouvoir*[17].

Parmi les raisons qui ont justifié le maintien du *statu quo* en Rhodésie, la question des conséquences internationales d'un désengagement apparaissent centrales. La volonté de préserver le Commonwealth comme socle de sa puissance post-empire demeurait primordiale pour la Grande-Bretagne et pour ce faire, l'appui des États africains était nécessaire. En effet, si la Grande-Bretagne cédait les dernières parcelles de souveraineté qui lui restaient en Rhodésie sans tenter de forcer un changement de régime, toute sa politique de décolonisation aurait été réduite à néant, puisqu'elle aurait alors violé la nature désormais multiraciale du nouveau Commonwealth. La Grande-Bretagne était ainsi prise entre sa volonté de garder des liens privilégiés avec la Rhodésie en la faisant rejoindre son entreprise post-coloniale, et sa volonté de ne pas briser l'équilibre fragile du Commonwealth. C'est qui ce transparaît dans la correspondance ministérielle de 1964 :

> *Nous sommes en plein dilemme. Nous avons deux objectifs, un à court terme, et un à long-terme.*
> *Notre objectif à court terme est d'éviter une déclaration unilatérale. Les conséquences d'une telle déclaration seraient non seulement désastreuses pour la Rhodésie, mais susciteraient une crise grave pour nous dans toute l'Afrique et aux Nations-Unies. Tout indique que les gouvernements africains du Commonwealth ne seront en aucun cas prêts à considérer des sanctions économiques limitées comme une réponse suffisante de notre part, et qu'ils insisteront pour que nous envoyions des troupes. Dès lors que nous ne sommes pas prêts à intervenir militairement, il est probable que beaucoup considèrent que nous nous accommodons d'une rébellion rhodésienne blanche. […]*
> *Notre objectif à long terme est d'obtenir des conditions pour que l'indépendance puisse être accordée sur une base acceptable par toutes les catégories de la population. Si nous donnons l'impression de reculer sur ce point, nous courons le risque de nous aliéner l'opinion africaine en Rhodésie-même, ainsi que le reste du Commonwealth et les Nations-Unies. D'un autre côté, si nous donnons aux Rhodésiens blancs l'impression que nous sommes déterminés à aller trop loin et trop vite, nous compromettrons à coup sûr notre propre objectif à court terme qui est d'éviter une déclaration unilatérale*[18].

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[17] « The granting of independence has superficial attractions in that we could wash our hands of responsibility for Southern Rhodesia affairs altogether. But to grant it on the basis of the present Southern Rhodesian franchise and legislature would attract to Her Majesty's Government in the United Nations, the Commonwealth and elsewhere, as much, if not more, criticism than under the present constitutional arrangement in which we have responsibility but no power », TNA, DO 183/490, Brief for the Secretary of State's visit to Central Africa, Relations with Southern Rhodesia, Central Africa Office, janvier 1963.

[18] « We are in a dilemma. We have two aims: one short-term and one long-term.
Our short-term aim is to prevent a unilateral declaration. The consequences of such a declaration would not be merely disastrous for Rhodesia but would precipitate a grave crisis for us throughout Africa and in the United Nations. All indications are that African Commonwealth Governments would not in that event regard limited economic action as a sufficient response on

D'un côté, le gouvernement britannique devait éviter une rébellion et prévenir la condamnation internationale qui suivrait toute absence de réaction. De l'autre, il devait travailler à un accord avec la Rhodésie du Sud qui soit acceptable pour les membres africains du Commonwealth. L'opinion du Commonwealth, et à travers lui, des membres africains, devint l'une des données centrales de la solution de la crise, comme le soulignait Duncan Sandys, alors ministre des Colonies dans une lettre à Winston Field, Premier ministre rhodésien :

> *Comme vous le savez, nous admettons que la responsabilité ultime de la décision concernant l'indépendance relève du gouvernement britannique ; mais comme je vous l'ai expliqué, nous ne sommes pas prêts à prendre des mesures qui pourraient entraîner des démissions du Commonwealth. Je sais que vos propositions émanent d'une réelle volonté de contribuer à une solution. Cependant, vous comprendrez bien, j'en suis certain, que pour la plupart, sinon tous les gouvernements du Commonwealth, vos propositions ne sauraient représenter une avancée significative (je pense qu'en fait, ils seraient tous de cet avis). Aussi vos propositions ne font-elles rien pour réduire la probabilité d'une crise au sein du Commonwealth si nous devions accorder l'indépendance sur ce fondement*[19].

Harold Wilson, qui devint Premier ministre en octobre 1964, souscrivait pleinement à ce point de vue, et alla jusqu'à prendre officiellement l'engagement devant le Commonwealth de faire en sorte que l'indépendance négociée en Rhodésie fût acceptable pour le peuple tout entier. En juin 1965, alors que la Rhodésie n'avait pas déclaré son indépendance, la question fit l'objet d'un paragraphe particulier dans le communiqué final du sommet du Commonwealth[20]. Le gouvernement britannique

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our part and that they would press us to send troops. As we are not prepared to intervene militarily, we are liable to be widely held to be condoning a white Rhodesian rebellion. [...]
Our long-term aim is to secure conditions under which independence can be granted on a basis acceptable to all sections of the population. If we appear to be retreating from this position, we run the risk of alienating African opinion in Rhodesia itself with the rest of the Commonwealth and the United Nations. On the other hand if we give the white Rhodesians the impression that we are determined to push ahead too far and too fast we shall certainly defeat our own short-term objective of preventing unilateral declaration », TNA, CAB 21/5512, Draft Cabinet Paper, 1964.

[19] « As you know, we accept that the ultimate responsibility for the decision on independence rests with the British Government; but as I explained to you, we are not prepared to take action which might precipitate resignations from the Commonwealth. I know that you have put forward your proposals in a genuine desire to be helpful. However, I am sure you will realise that most, if not all Commonwealth Governments would not consider that your proposals represented any significant advance—I think all of them would in fact take that view. Your proposals would therefore do nothing to reduce the likelihood of a crisis within the Commonwealth if we were to grant independence on that basis », Cmnd. 2807, Southern Rhodesia: Documents Relating to the Negotiations between the UK and Southern Rhodesia Governments November 1963-November 1965, 1965, message du 22 février 1964 de Duncan Sandys à Winston Field.

[20] *The Commonwealth at the Summit*, *Communiqués of Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings, 1944-1986*, London, Commonwealth Secretariat, Marlborough House, 1987, pp. 99-100.

conditionnait alors l'indépendance de la Rhodésie à cinq principes : le gouvernement rhodésien devait s'engager à ne pas entraver la progression vers un gouvernement majoritaire ; à ne pas revenir sur les principes de la constitution ; à améliorer de manière immédiate le statut politique de la population africaine ; à s'engager sur la voie d'une éradication de la ségrégation ; enfin, le gouvernement britannique devait être convaincu que l'indépendance était acceptable pour le peuple de Rhodésie tout entier[21]. Ce dernier principe permettait ainsi à Londres de conserver la possibilité de donner l'indépendance à un gouvernement de la minorité blanche, dès lors que la population rhodésienne toute entière était d'accord.

Cette solution ne satisfaisait pas les États africains qui renvoyaient la Grande-Bretagne à sa responsabilité dans la crise, rappelaient au gouvernement britannique ses engagements et limitaient sa marge de manœuvre. Avant la déclaration unilatérale d'indépendance, Kenneth Kaunda, Président de la Zambie nouvellement indépendante, prononçait un discours devant la Royal Commonwealth Society, le 24 juin 1965:

> *Les anciennes colonies britanniques et le reste du monde tourneront le dos à la Grande-Bretagne si, par sa faiblesse ou son refus de faire face à ses responsabilités, elle permet à une autre Afrique du Sud d'advenir en Rhodésie du sud.*
> *Je compatis avec le peuple britannique et le gouvernement britannique pour les difficultés qui les attendent. Mais la Grande-Bretagne a pris la décision de devenir une puissance coloniale, et s'est elle-même infligée ces problèmes. Si une nation choisit de devenir une puissance coloniale, elle doit accepter sa responsabilité en tant que garant des droits, des intérêts et de l'avenir des peuples des colonies*[22].

Ne pas céder aux revendications du gouvernement sud-rhodésien n'était pas suffisant. L'imbroglio rhodésien devenait finalement la dette du colonialisme dont la Grande-Bretagne devait s'acquitter. Plus que le gouvernement rhodésien, c'est la responsabilité de l'ancienne puissance coloniale qui est ici mise en cause. À l'instar du président zambien, la plupart des États africains nouvellement indépendants considéraient la Grande-Bretagne d'abord comme l'ancienne puissance coloniale, et non comme un membre du Commonwealth post-colonial. À l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies comme au sein du Commonwealth, la Grande-Bretagne était mise en accusation par ses anciens territoires africains pour son passé colonial, dont la Rhodésie était considérée comme une séquelle.

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[21] Pour un énoncé de l'ensemble des cinq principes, voir les archives du Secrétariat général du Commonwealth, Commonwealth Secretariat Archives (CSA), PAD/C152/5/2, British Policy towards Rhodesia, Factel n° 492, 15 juin 1966.

[22] « Former British colonies and the rest of the world will turn their backs on Britain if, through her weakness or refusal to face her responsibilities, she allows another South Africa to emerge in Southern Rhodesia.
I sympathise with the British people and the British government in the difficulties which lie ahead. But Britain made the decision to become a colonial power and burdened herself with these problems. If a nation chooses to become a colonial power, she must accept responsibility for ensuring the right, the interests and the future of the people of the colonies », CSA, SG 172/ZAM.

La crise rhodésienne s'invite au sein du Commonwealth

À partir de 1964, le Commonwealth fut utilisé par les États africains comme un moyen de faire pression sur la politique africaine de la Grande-Bretagne, plutôt que comme un lieu d'échange[23]. L'échec du gouvernement britannique face à la rébellion du gouvernement rhodésien en novembre 1965 entraîna une levée de boucliers au sein du Commonwealth. Les États africains voulaient que la Grande-Bretagne fît usage de la force pour obliger le gouvernement rhodésien à accepter les seuls termes d'une indépendance acceptable pour eux, à savoir l'installation d'un gouvernement représentatif de toute la population. Or le gouvernement britannique ne voulait pas s'engager sur ce point, même après la rébellion rhodésienne[24]. Il choisit de s'en tenir aux cinq principes (auxquels fut ajouté un sixième après la déclaration unilatérale d'indépendance[25]) qui lui donnaient une plus grande marge de manœuvre pour trouver une solution de sortie de crise, et refusa de s'engager sur le slogan NIBMAR (*No Independence before Majority Rule*), avancé par les États africains. Lors des conférences du Commonwealth de 1966 qui suivirent la déclaration unilatérale d'indépendance, la Grande-Bretagne fut ainsi mise « au banc des accusés », selon l'expression même du Premier ministre britannique[26].

Le rapport de force au sein du Commonwealth s'était entièrement inversé entre le début et le milieu de la décennie : de partenaire dominant au début des années 1960, la Grande-Bretagne apparaissait de plus en plus en position de faiblesse. Forts de leur nombre, les États africains entendaient imposer à la Grande-Bretagne une solution à la crise, arguant de la légitimité que leur donnait leur proximité avec les Africains de Rhodésie. En ce sens, leur discours opérait une division symbolique en termes raciaux, reflétant le rapport de force d'inspiration coloniale que la crise rhodésienne avait introduit dans une association qui se voulait post-coloniale. Par exemple, le Président de la Sierra Leone, Albert Margai, s'en prit vivement au Premier ministre britannique lors des conférences de 1966 : « des réponses comme celle-ci ne prenaient pas en compte combien l'émotion des Africains était forte sur l'ensemble de ce sujet : personne, sinon un Africain, ne pouvait le comprendre »[27] ; « [i]l était certainement malheureux pour eux que la Rhodésie n'ait pas obtenu l'indépendance avant que le Commonwealth ne se soit doté de nombreux nouveaux

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[23] J. D. B. MILLER, *Survey of Commonwealth Affairs, Problems of Expansion and Attrition, 1953-1969*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974, p. 396.

[24] « In the meantime we should do all we can to keep the doors open through the Governor and the Chief Justice and to explore any possibilities, while continuing to bring home that British policy continues to represent a reasonable alternative to either illegality or immediate majority rule. » (TNA, CAB 130/266, MISC 100/A (66) 12, Future Policy, 1er avril 1966, souligné dans l'original).

[25] Le sixième principe visait à garantir l'absence d'oppression de la majorité par la minorité ou de la minorité par la majorité, en dehors des considérations raciales (CSA, PAD/C152/5/2, *British Policy towards Rhodesia*, Factel n° 492, 15 juin 1966).

[26] Harold WILSON, *The Labour Government 1964-1970, a Personal Record*, London: Weidenfield and Nicholson, 1971, p. 195.

[27] « Answers such as this took no account of how deeply African felt on this whole subject: no one but an African could understand this », CSA, CPM (66/2), 5ème réunion, 8 septembre 1966.

membres ayant à cœur de protéger les intérêts des Africains »[28]. Enfin, Harold Wilson fut accusé de collusion raciale avec la minorité blanche de Rhodésie dès la conférence de Lagos, par le vice-président zambien : « derrière la crise actuelle en Rhodésie, on retrouve les idées de racisme, de colonialisme, d'impérialisme économique et le genre de sentimentalisme qui a trouvé son expression dans le concept de 'kith and kin' [les nôtres] »[29].

Le registre choisi par les représentants africains au sein du Commonwealth était plus à même de favoriser les discussions sur un terrain émotionnel que rationnel. De son côté, Wilson s'estima victime d'un traitement digne de celui d'une colonie[30], et n'hésitant pas à prendre le contre-pied des arguments de ses homologues africains, il se plaça lui aussi sur le terrain de la confrontation coloniale. Usant de la même violence symbolique il finit par mettre en danger l'avenir des relations privilégiées avec l'Afrique que le Commonwealth pouvait représenter. La situation rhodésienne venait marquer de son empreinte la confrontation entre États africains et Grande-Bretagne, donnant au débat une dimension raciale qui n'avait pas sa place au sein du Commonwealth multiracial. Cette dérive fut déplorée lors de la conférence de septembre 1966 par le Premier ministre néo-zélandais Keith Holyoake : « ce qui caractérisait le plus le Commonwealth était le fait qu'il soit multiracial, et non une association de groupes raciaux. Mais il donnait l'impression d'aborder le problème rhodésien sous un angle racial. Cela avait à coup sûr pour effet d'anéantir les chances d'avoir une quelconque influence sur le régime de Smith »[31]. La crise rhodésienne faisait ainsi peser sur le Commonwealth et les relations afro-britanniques le poids de la confrontation raciale qu'elle représentait.

Les pressions exercées par les États africains sur la Grande-Bretagne avaient pour cible indirecte le Commonwealth, comme si celui-ci n'était qu'une relique du passé impérial, toujours intrinsèquement associé à la Grande-Bretagne. Par exemple, avant même la déclaration unilatérale d'indépendance, Julius Nyerere avait menacé de quitter le Commonwealth[32]. Le gouvernement britannique fit montre d'une attitude relativement sévère à l'égard de ses collègues, enjoignant le Secrétaire général, Arnold Smith, à remettre de l'ordre dans les rangs du Commonwealth :

> *J'ai dit [à Arnold Smith] que je convenais du fait que parmi les pays africains, certains nous soupçonnaient d'encourager en sous-main l'indépendance de la Rhodésie, mais que j'espérais que cela se dissiperait après la déclaration ferme que nous ferions s'il devait y*

[28] « no doubt it was also unfortunate for them that Rhodesia had not achieved independence before the Commonwealth had acquired many new members who had the interests of the Africans at heart », CSA, CPM (66/2), 5ème réunion, 8 septembre 1966.
[29] « Behind the present crisis in Rhodesia lay ideas of racialism, colonialism, economic imperialism and the kind of sentimentalism that found expression in the concept of 'kith and kin' », CSA, CPM (66), Lagos, 2ème réunion, p. 5.
[30] CSA, PAD 152/3/51/02, 12 septembre 1966.
[31] « the main point about the Commonwealth was that it was multi-racial and not an association of racial groups. But it was giving the impression of dealing with the Rhodesian problem on a racial basis. This must surely destroy the chances of having any impact on the Smith regime », CSA, PAD 152/3/51/02, 5ème réunion en séance restreinte.
[32] MILLER, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

> *avoir une déclaration unilatérale d'indépendance. Cependant, je suis d'accord avec lui sur le fait qu'il pourrait être utile qu'il prenne d'ores et déjà contact avec les gouvernements africains au cas où les choses viendraient à s'aggraver, car il pourrait peut-être faire quelque chose pour leur faire entrer dans la tête que menacer de quitter le Commonwealth chaque fois que la Grande-Bretagne faisait quelque chose qu'ils n'aimaient pas était constitutionnellement injustifié, et également puéril*[33].

En décembre 1965, vingt délégués africains quittèrent l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies lorsque le Premier ministre britannique prit la parole, en signe de protestation contre la déclaration unilatérale d'indépendance. Au sein de l'Organisation de l'Unité Africaine (OUA), les États les plus virulents parvinrent à faire adopter une résolution appelant les États africains à rompre leurs relations diplomatiques avec la Grande-Bretagne. Deux États africains du Commonwealth, le Ghana et la Tanzanie, choisirent d'appliquer cette résolution tandis que le Kenya et le Nigeria, partisans d'une approche relativement modérée, refusèrent de s'y conformer. La Zambie, pourtant à l'origine de la résolution par le biais de son représentant, le ministre des Affaires étrangères Simon Kapwepwe[34], ne choisit pas cette solution. Kenneth Kaunda, toutefois, ne se déplaça pas pour la conférence du Commonwealth de janvier 1966, ni pour celle de septembre 1966.

La Tanzanie de Nyerere et le Ghana de Nkrumah refusèrent de participer à la conférence du Commonwealth de janvier 1966 mais n'allèrent pas jusqu'à claquer la porte de l'organisation. Encouragé par Arnold Smith, Nyerere mit un point d'honneur à dissocier la rupture des relations diplomatiques avec la Grande-Bretagne et le fait de quitter le Commonwealth, manifestant ainsi un certain attachement au Commonwealth qui n'était pas sans rappeler celui de la Grande-Bretagne au début des années 1960 : « Vous avez tout à fait raison de dire que j'établis une distinction claire entre rompre les relations diplomatiques avec la Grande-Bretagne et quitter le Commonwealth. Je ne veux pas quitter les Commonwealth. Je veux qu'il surmonte ses difficultés actuelles, pour devenir plus fort »[35].

Cette réflexion de Nyerere amène à s'interroger sur l'intention réelle des chefs d'État africains en 1966. Il est certain que leur volonté était d'exprimer directement

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[33] « I told [Arnold Smith] that I agreed that there was a suspicion among African countries that we were in fact conniving at Rhodesia independence, but I hoped this would be dispelled by the strong statement we should make if there were to be a U.D.I. Nevertheless I agreed with him that it might be useful if he could make early contacts with African Governments if there were to be serious developments, since he might be able to do something to get it into their heads that to threaten to leave the Commonwealth every time that Britain did something that they disliked was constitutionally ill-founded and also childish », TNA, DO 183/867, Saville Garner, 1er octobre 1965.

[34] MILLER, *op. cit.*, p. 214.

[35] « You are quite correct in stating that I make clear distinction between breaking diplomatic relations with Britain, and leaving the Commonwealth. I do not want to leave the Commonwealth. I want it to surmount its present difficulties, and then grow stronger », CSA, PAD C152/02/01, 31 décembre 1965.

à la Grande-Bretagne leur mécontentement et leur indignation, non seulement au sujet du problème rhodésien, mais surtout dans l'impression d'inégalité qui semblait se dégager de leur relation bilatérale avec la Grande-Bretagne. En ce sens, ils rejetaient la vision britannique du Commonwealth qui avait prévalu au moment des indépendances, celle d'un Commonwealth vu comme vecteur de la politique africaine du gouvernement britannique. En même temps, aucun des membres africains du Commonwealth ne semblait souhaiter la fin du Commonwealth, bien au contraire. C'est finalement bien l'avenir du Commonwealth, et à travers lui, l'avenir des relations entre la Grande-Bretagne et les États d'Afrique qui semblait l'enjeu de cette crise, plus que l'avenir de la Rhodésie elle-même.

Sauver le Commonwealth pour sauver les relations afro-britanniques ?

En effet, du fait du nombre accru de membres, le Commonwealth lui-même traversait une phase de remise en question. La conférence de janvier 1966 en offre un exemple particulièrement révélateur. Cette conférence fut la première à ne pas être organisée par la Grande-Bretagne, qui avait cédé cette tâche au tout nouveau Secrétariat général du Commonwealth, créé en juin 1965. En outre, contrairement à l'usage alors en vigueur, elle ne se tint pas dans l'ancienne capitale impériale, mais dans l'un des pays africains du Commonwealth, le Nigeria. Il s'agissait en somme de la première conférence où la Grande-Bretagne ne bénéficiait pas d'un statut particulier parmi les autres membres du Commonwealth, en même temps qu'elle révélait le poids gagné par l'Afrique au sein du Commonwealth. Toutefois, malgré la remarque du Premier ministre britannique qui estimait avoir été mis « sur le banc des accusés » à Lagos, l'objectif de cette conférence présidée par le modéré Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa était avant tout la conciliation[36].

La conférence de septembre 1966, organisée à Londres par le Secrétariat général, s'avéra plus houleuse que la précédente. En effet, le gouvernement britannique était parvenu, à l'issue de la conférence de Lagos, à gagner du temps en assurant que grâce à sa politique de sanctions économiques, pourtant estimée insuffisante par les États africains, la rébellion serait terminée dans un délai qui se comptait « en semaines et non en mois »[37]. En septembre 1966, le bilan de cette politique semblait donner raison aux États africains, les renforçant dans leur opposition vis-à-vis de la Grande-Bretagne. Dans le même temps, un certain nombre de soubresauts politiques avait secoué l'Afrique entre janvier et septembre 1966 : Nkrumah avait été renversé au Ghana, Sir Abubakar assassiné, la constitution suspendue par Obote en Ouganda. Par ailleurs, le gouvernement britannique fit connaître en avril son intention d'engager des pourparlers avec le régime rebelle de Rhodésie. Enfin, le président zambien annonça qu'il suspendait son retrait du Commonwealth au résultat de la conférence à venir[38]. Enfin, sur 23 membres du Commonwealth, 14 n'étaient pas représentés par leur chef de gouvernement. Cela concernait non seulement des États africains (Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, Zambie) mais

[36] MILLER, *op. cit.*, p. 215
[37] CSA, CPM (66) Lagos, 5ème réunion, p. 10.
[38] MILLER, *op. cit.*, p. 223.

également d'autres membres comme l'Inde ou le Pakistan. L'esprit des réunions au sommet du Commonwealth est de favoriser le dialogue officiel mais également personnel, le caractère relativement informel de la réunion contribuant à des échanges de personne à personne, plutôt que de chef d'État à chef d'État. Or l'absence des principaux acteurs de plus de la moitié des États du Commonwealth remettait en cause cette tradition, ouvrant la voie à des échanges plus stéréotypés et plus virulents. Dans le même temps, le fait que certains États ne soient pas représentés par leur chef de gouvernement donnait moins d'importance aux éventuels propos tenus lors de la conférence. Tout comme le président zambien n'avait pas donné suite à la résolution de l'OUA initiée par son propre ministre des Affaires étrangères, les accusations violentes portées par ce dernier à l'encontre de la Grande-Bretagne et son départ anticipé de la conférence ne revêtait pas la même importance que si Kenneth Kaunda en avait été l'acteur. Le *Times* relatait le 3 septembre 1966 l'analyse d'Albert Margai, le Président sierra-léonais : « de nombreux dirigeants ont préféré se faire représenter quand le sujet principal était susceptible de mettre à rude épreuve leurs bonnes relations avec la Grande-Bretagne. […] Moins il y aurait de Premiers ministres présents quand les esprits s'échaufferaient, moins il y en aurait qui prendraient des décisions ou postures irrévocables et plus tard regrettées »[39].

L'intention réelle des États africains était-elle alors de préserver le Commonwealth en lui évitant une confrontation dont l'issue aurait pu lui être fatale ? Le Commonwealth, et en particulier les États africains, demeuraient une donnée incontournable de la solution de la crise de Rhodésie, et malgré l'opposition sur la méthode, le gouvernement britannique n'avait pas l'intention de céder sur les principes qu'il avait concédés devant le Commonwealth :

> *Le premier ministre a expliqué combien il était difficile de gérer le problème rhodésien avec quatre groupes à prendre en compte : l'opinion publique britannique, l'opinion rhodésienne, les membres africains du Commonwealth, et plus largement, l'opinion mondiale dont [la Grande-Bretagne] dépendait pour mettre fin à la rébellion par le biais des sanctions économiques, mais qui elle-même était influencée par l'opinion africaine. […] De plus, la conférence des Premiers ministres du Commonwealth à venir, à Lagos, le confrontait à un problème épineux ; il était presque inévitable que si, à Lagos, il donnait aux Africains les garanties qu'ils recherchaient, cela repousserait la perspective de mettre fin à la rébellion en Rhodésie*[40].

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[39] « many leaders preferred to send representatives when the dominant issue was one that might inconveniently put a strain on their good relations with Britain. […] The fewer Prime Ministers present when tempers run high, the fewer there are to make irreversible decisions or gestures later regretted », *The Times*, "Changing Commonwealth", 3 septembre 1966, in MILLER, *op. cit.*, p. 226.

[40] « The Prime Minister explained the difficulties of managing the Rhodesian problem with four constituencies to handle: British public opinion; Rhodesian opinion; the African members of the Commonwealth; and, more widely, world opinion on whom [Britain] depended for bringing the rebellion to an end by economic sanctions but which, in its turn, was influenced by African opinion. […] Moreover, the forthcoming Lagos conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers presented him with a difficult problem; it was almost

Le gouvernement britannique n'avait pas renoncé, malgré les oppositions africaines, à une solution négociée avec le régime rebelle. Sa préoccupation première était de mettre fin à la rébellion et cet objectif, qui relevait en quelque sorte d'une question d'honneur, était au moins aussi important que celui de maintenir de bonnes relations avec les États africains. La crise de Rhodésie eut pour effet de remettre en question la centralité du Commonwealth dans la politique étrangère britannique :

> *Dans le calcul de nos intérêts, le maintien de l'association Commonwealth est un facteur important à prendre en compte, mais ce n'est pas le seul. Il est donc important que les autres pays du Commonwealth ne se bercent pas d'illusions sur le fait que, pour insultants ou difficiles qu'ils soient, on pourra toujours compter sur la Grande-Bretagne en dernier recours pour maintenir le Commonwealth. Nous ne sommes pas prêts à maintenir le Commonwealth à n'importe quel prix pour nous. D'autres pays du Commonwealth en ont pris conscience au cours des négociations rhodésiennes, et cela a eu un effet positif ; eux-mêmes ont été forcés de se demander s'ils seraient relativement indifférents à l'éclatement du Commonwealth, et ont répondu par la négative. […] Le Commonwealth n'est pas un groupe monolithique et homogène et on ne peut attendre de lui qu'il agisse seulement comme un instrument visant à soutenir les politiques britanniques. Mais il a un rôle important et précieux pour la Grande-Bretagne, les autres membres et le monde en général*[41].

La virulence des échanges entre la Grande-Bretagne et les États africains avait finalement eu une vertu cathartique, qui permit aux deux parties de dépasser la dimension impériale de leurs relations, tout en proposant un équilibre dans le respect mutuel de leur différence. Il ressortait de la crise rhodésienne que le Commonwealth n'était ni la propriété de la Grande-Bretagne ni celle des États africains, bien que ces derniers fussent majoritaires en nombre au milieu de la décennie. Les deux parties, Grande-Bretagne comme États africains, se retrouvèrent autour de l'intérêt mutuel

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inevitable that if he were to give the Africans at Lagos the assurances they were seeking, this would set back the prospects of bringing the rebellion to an end in Rhodesia », TNA, PREM 13/1115, Record of a conversation between Prime Minister and Lord Alport, Downing Street, 11.00 a.m., 8 janvier 1966.

[41] « In calculating our interests, the maintenance of the Commonwealth association is an important factor to be weighed, but not the only one. It is important, therefore, that other Commonwealth countries should not be lulled by the impression that, however offensive and difficult they may be, Britain can always be relied on in the last resort to ensure that the Commonwealth is sustained. We are not prepared to sustain the Commonwealth at any price to ourselves. This has become apparent to other Commonwealth countries in the course of the Rhodesian negotiations and has had a healthy effect; they themselves have been forced to ask whether the break-up of the Commonwealth would be a matter of comparative indifference to them and have answered in the negative. […] The Commonwealth is not a single cohesive group and it cannot be expected to act just as an instrument for support of British policies. But it has an important role of value to Britain and the other Members and to the world at large », TNA, CAB 129/129, The Value of the Commonwealth, Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Affairs, 7 avril 1967.

qu'ils trouvaient dans la continuation du Commonwealth en tant que lien privilégié entre États. Avec la crise de Rhodésie, la Grande-Bretagne et les États africains ont en quelque sorte « décolonisé » leurs relations.

Il n'en reste pas moins que la crise de Rhodésie a largement érodé le capital de confiance que les États africains étaient prêts à accorder à la Grande-Bretagne d'Harold Wilson, et que la reconstruction ne fut pas sans difficultés. En 1971, c'est Kenneth Kaunda qui fut à l'origine de la Déclaration des Principes du Commonwealth, qui visait en tout premier lieu non pas à exclure, mais bien au contraire à ramener la Grande-Bretagne dans un Commonwealth lié aux principes post-coloniaux qui avaient inspiré sa politique de décolonisation en Afrique. Il ne s'agissait pas seulement de faire pression sur la Grande-Bretagne au sujet des ventes d'armes à l'Afrique du Sud et de la solution alors envisagée pour résoudre le problème rhodésien, mais également de rappeler le sens du lien Commonwealth. À travers le Commonwealth, les États africains, pour insatisfaits qu'ils fussent de l'absence de solution au problème rhodésien, demeuraient tout de même au premier plan dans le règlement de la crise, ayant un accès direct et informel avec la Grande-Bretagne. Le Commonwealth leur permettait d'apporter leur aide au règlement du problème, surtout après l'ultime rupture avec la Grande-Bretagne que représentait la déclaration d'une république par le gouvernement rhodésien en 1970.

Conclusion

L'arrivée sur la scène internationale des États africains fut marquée par un antagonisme majeur avec la Grande-Bretagne. À travers la crise de Rhodésie, c'est le sens du Commonwealth, et à travers lui, des relations entre la Grande-Bretagne et les États africains qui était mis en question. Passée l'apothéose de la crise, les relations ne se définiraient plus en termes de « besoin » que l'une des parties avait de l'autre, mais en soi, dans le cadre normal de la politique internationale. Le Commonwealth ne serait plus seulement un moyen pour la Grande-Bretagne de préserver les États nouvellement indépendants dans sa sphère d'influence, ni un moyen pour les États africains de régler leurs comptes avec le passé impérial. Le Commonwealth est ainsi devenu une plate-forme privilégiée de dialogue entre États unis par un passé commun et une langue commune, qui n'engageait pas leur positionnement politique présent et futur mais qui constituait le socle d'une compréhension mutuelle privilégiée. Les fondements de cette nouvelle entente étaient le respect mutuel des membres et l'adhésion à un certain nombre de valeurs communes. Les relations entre la Grande-Bretagne et les États africains ne furent pas nécessairement très apaisées dans les années 1970, mais l'expérience de la crise rhodésienne a changé leur regard sur le Commonwealth et les uns sur les autres. Les divergences d'opinion et d'intérêt ne s'exprimaient plus par référence au passé colonial mais en se projetant dans l'avenir. Dès lors, on peut parler d'un renouveau des relations afro-britanniques consécutif à la crise rhodésienne qui secoua le Commonwealth pendant les années 1960.

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Britain, Biafra and the Balance of Payments: The Formation of London's 'One Nigeria' Policy

Gary BLANK
London School of Economics

Introduction: A forgotten war in British foreign policy studies

The Nigerian Civil War (1967-1970) galvanized world attention to an extent that was truly remarkable for an 'internal' conflict. When the oil-rich, predominantly Igbo Eastern Region of Nigeria declared an independent republic of Biafra in May 1967, the ruling Federal Military Government (FMG) responded with an economic blockade and 'total war'.[1] For the first time in post-colonial Africa, accusations of 'genocide' were widely made as images of destruction and starvation beamed into millions of television sets worldwide.[2] Journalists, politicians, scholars and activists hotly contested the merits and morality of the FMG's policies in a ceaseless stream of polemics. As one scholar observed, 'many speculated on whether more blood or more ink was being spilt on the battlefields'.[3]

Nowhere in the Western world was this debate fiercer than in Britain, Nigeria's former colonial master. Whereas many European countries and the United States refused to sell arms and military equipment to Nigeria for the duration of the war, Britain became its most significant military supplier and diplomatic supporter. This decision served to implicate Britain in the events of the civil war, and constituted an (indirect) form of intervention. Igbo expatriates and religious and humanitarian organizations protested against British policy through demonstrations, petitions and forums. In January 1969, British dockworkers refused to handle shipments of arms bound for Lagos. Perhaps most significant, however, was the dissent that rent Harold Wilson's own ranks: a significant proportion of the Labour

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[1] Although there was dispute over which side 'started' armed hostilities, FMG General Olusegun Obasanjo later acknowledged in his memoirs that 'Federal troops fired the first shot of the civil war on 6 July 1967', Olusegun OBASANJO, *My Command*, Ibadan: Heinemann, 1980, p. xi.

[2] Accusations of 'genocide' against the FMG were highly contentious, and after the war few continued to make them without qualification. For example, Suzanne CRONJE, a leading proponent of the Biafran cause in Britain, suggests that the FMG committed 'conditional genocide.' *The World and Nigeria: The Diplomatic History of the Nigerian Civil War 1967-1970*, London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1972, p. 337.

[3] Laurie WISEBERG, 'An Emerging Literature: Studies of the Nigerian Civil War', *African Studies Review*, vol. 18, n° 1, April 1975, p. 117.

Party membership, the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP), and even the Cabinet challenged London's Nigeria policy.[4] In his memoirs, Harold Wilson recalled that 'Nigeria had replaced Vietnam as our major overseas preoccupation. It took up far more of my time, and that of ministerial colleagues, and far more moral wear and tear than any other issue'.[5]

The Nigerian Civil War was clearly a foreign policy issue of foremost importance to the Wilson government, Parliament, and Britain at large. Curiously, however, it has received scant attention from historians of British foreign policy generally, and the Wilson administration specifically.[6] This article utilises declassified documents at the British National Archives to address a fundamental question of historical disputation: why did the British government decide to diplomatically and materially support the FMG's 'One Nigeria' policy in 1967? There is sharp disagreement on this question in the existing literature, most of which was written long before the declassification of official documents. In their authoritative histories of the war, John de St. Jorre and John Stremlau largely accept the public justifications issued by the Wilson government, especially the contention that a successful secession in one African country would lead to the 'balkanization' of the continent; the fear that the Russians were waiting in the wings to replace British influence; and the notion that Britain had a responsibility to support a 'legal' Commonwealth government by continuing a 'traditional' supply of arms.[7]

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[4] For the activities of civil society, see W.A. AJIBOLA, *Foreign Policy and Public Opinion*, Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1978. For dissent in the Cabinet, see Philip ZIEGLER, *Wilson: the Authorised Life of Lord Wilson of Rievaulx*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1993, pp. 339-340; Barbara CASTLE, *The Castle Diaries 1964-70*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson,1984, pp. 566, 734; and Richard CROSSMAN, *The Diaries of a Cabinet Minister*, Volume III London: Hamish Hamilton, 1977, pp. 283, 409, 747.

[5] Harold Wilson, *The Labour Government 1964-1970*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971, p. 558.

[6] While most of the relevant archival documents were declassified over a decade ago, only three historians have analysed them in much depth. John W.YOUNG (*The Labour Governments 1964-70, Volume 2: International Policy*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003, chapter eight) and Mark CURTIS (*Unpeople: Britain's Secret Human Rights Abuses,* London: Vintage, 2004, chapter ten) both discuss the conflict within broader histories of British foreign policy. A more careful and detailed treatment of British decision-making in the early months of the war is provided by Chibuike UCHE, 'Oil, British Interests and the Nigerian Civil War', *Journal of African History*, vol. 49, n° 1, 2008. Uche's persuasive account parallels my own in many respects. However, he offers only a cursory analysis of British weapons sales to Nigeria, treating it as peripheral to, and separate from, oil interests. He therefore accepts the oft-repeated argument that London's decision to supply arms was spurred by the Russian 'threat' (p.127-128). In contrast, I argue below that the 'decision' unfolded in a number of stages, and was inseparable from evolving debates regarding the oil question. Uche's assertion that French oil companies funded Biafra is also highly problematic, based as it is on spurious Federal claims from the time (p. 128-129, fn. 62). For an informed discussion of this latter point, see Suzanne CRONJE, *op. cit.*, pp. 201-202.

[7] See John DE ST. JORRE, *The Nigerian Civil War*, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1972; and John STREMLAU, *The International Politics of the Nigerian Civil War 1967-1970*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977.

Authors with a pro-Biafran bent, on the other hand, place greater stress upon the probable economic motives underlying British policy. Suzanne Cronje, a journalist and leader of the Britain-Biafra Association during the war, notes that 'it is important to differentiate between the official arguments and the real motivation. The Nigerian Federation had been conceived by Britain as a large West African state, friendly to British interests and weighty enough to be used as a brake on black African ambitions.'[8]

Natural resources were 'safe' within the Federation, and 'a single large market' was much more conducive to British business than several smaller statelets. Herbert Ekwe-Ekwe, a Nigerian historian, largely echoes Cronje's claims. According to Ekwe-Ekwe, it is crucial to consider the 'spread' of British capital investments and other economic interests across the entire Federation (totalling over £1.5 billion). Wary of any disruption to the growth of British business interests, the Wilson government 'clearly reasoned that it was rational to support the party in the Nigerian civil war that was fighting to maintain the political status quo'.[9] Both Cronje and Ekwe-Ekwe assert that Britain vastly augmented its military supplies to the FMG in order to secure British investments.[10]

A close study of British decision-making during the initial months of the crisis, between the spring of 1967 and the winter of 1968, reveals that economic factors were indeed the most significant in shaping the contours of Britain's Nigeria policy. However, this is only the beginning of an explanation, not its end point. Previous analyses largely offered a functional view of British policy: because Britain had economic interest 'x', it invariably supported the Nigerian government and its policies. What is left out is the potential contradiction between *divergent* economic interests (e.g., the 'spread' of investment across a united Nigeria versus concentrated oil investment in Biafra), and the range of strategies these interests afforded policy-makers. The best means of securing Britain's economic interests, especially in a highly uncertain and volatile situation, were subject to considerable contestation and debate within the government and civil service. Despite the colonial legacy, London's Nigeria policy was formed in an historical process, and not determined in advance.

Colonial legacies and the fruits of decolonization

The historical background to the civil war has been explored in great detail elsewhere. For the purposes of this article, however, it is helpful to briefly highlight two legacies of British colonial rule. The first is the significance of metropolitan economic concerns, and the second is the haphazard amalgamation of territories and peoples into a single 'Nigerian' colony. It has been claimed that British rule laid 'the seeds of disaster' for the fruition of ethnic rivalry and violence in the post-colonial

[8] CRONJE, *op. cit.*, p. 326-7.
[9] Herbert EKWE-EKWE, *Conflict and Intervention in Africa: Nigeria, Angola, Zaire*, London: Macmillan, 1990, p. 29.
[10] CRONJE, *op. cit.*, p. 320.

period.[11] The emphasis here, however, is specifically on how the interaction of these two factors fostered a particular form of ethnicized political-economic conflict in the early years of Nigerian independence. At different times, British diplomacy exacerbated and attenuated these conflicts *before* they erupted in civil war. Biafran secession, in turn, directly implicated the British government and British firms, precisely because the crisis intersected their own historically established political-economic interests.

After the Anglo-French Convention of 1898 formalised the colonial division of West Africa, Britain's Colonial Office sought to save expenditure by amalgamating its new protectorates. One such amalgamation created the single colony of 'Nigeria' in 1914.[12] Its first governor, Lord Lugard, was intimately familiar with the intricacies of colonial governance and mindful of the economic imperatives of imperial rule. As he would recall in his memoirs, 'the partition of Africa was due primarily to the economic necessity of increasing the supplies of raw materials and food to meet the needs of industrial Europe'.[13] The establishment of Nigeria prompted measures to secure a very important variety of raw material—minerals, and particularly oil. In January 1914 the colonial administration passed Mineral Oil Ordinance No. 17, a measure which restricted oil prospecting to British companies alone.[14] This measure enabled a consortium of Shell and British Petroleum (BP) to gain an early monopoly on oil prospecting, although commercially-viable quantities of oil were only discovered in the Niger Delta in 1956, a few years before independence.[15] Colonial rule proved to be a boon for other British corporations as well. Prime among them was the United Africa Company (UAC), a subsidiary of Unilever, which in turn was the descendant of the Royal Niger Company. The UAC controlled 41.3 per cent of Nigeria's import and external trade by the time the civil war broke out. Subsidiaries of the major British banks, such as Barclays and Lloyds, dominated Nigerian finance.[16] Overall, Nigeria was Britain's most important market in 'black' Africa.[17]

With such significant economic and geopolitical stakes to consider, it is hardly surprising that British politicians and colonial administrators were highly cautious when approaching the question of Nigerian independence. Britain carefully and gradually cultivated 'individual liberal nationalist leaders' through various

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[11] John Hatch, for example, argues that many of the roots of Nigeria's civil war agonies can be traced to the legacy of British colonial rule. See John HATCH, *Nigeria: the Seeds of Disaster*, Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1970.

[12] See John CARLAND, *The Colonial Office and Nigeria, 1898-1914*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985, pp. 130-34.

[13] F. D. LUGARD, *The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa*, London: Frank Cass, 1965, p. 613.

[14] Andy ROWELL, James MARRIOTT & Lorne STOCKMAN, *The Next Gulf. London, Washington and Oil Conflict in Nigeria*, London: Constable, 2005, p. 59.

[15] James BAMBERG, *British Petroleum and Global Oil 1950-1975*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp. 109-110. For a detailed discussion of oil exploration during the colonial period, see Phia STEYN, 'Oil Exploration in Colonial Nigeria, c. 1903-58', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol. 37, n° 2, June 2009.

[16] EKWE-EKWE, *Conflict and Intervention in Africa*, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-8.

[17] CRONJE, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

constitutional reforms and attempts at development planning, while simultaneously enacting 'anti-leftist measures' for the repression of Marxists.[18] Such caution proved beneficial: during the first few years following independence in 1960, Nigeria became a leader of the 'moderate' faction of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and Nigerian leaders expressly disavowed socialist policies and nationalization measures.[19] Indeed, the economic importance of Nigeria only increased with the election of the first Wilson government in 1964. The Labour Party specifically looked to Commonwealth trade as a means of overcoming persistent balance of payments problems.[20]

British hopes that Nigeria would be a 'showcase' of Western-style liberal democracy in Africa, however, were quickly dispelled. As Lugard himself had acknowledged, the objective of Nigeria's amalgamation in 1914 was 'to unify administrations, not peoples'.[21] More than 250 ethnic groups were stitched together with little regard for mutual historic ties.[22] Three ethnic groups predominated, and each claimed one of three regions as the seat of its power: the mainly Christian Igbo in the East, the primarily Muslim Hausa/Fulani in the North, and the mixed Muslim/Christian Yoruba in the West. Educational, economic and political inequalities fuelled conflict between the regions even during the colonial period, and both the North and the West made threats of secession before 1960.[23]

The discovery of oil, moreover, led to important institutional changes even before the onset of independence. In 1958, the colonial government established a commission to recommend changes to revenue allocation. Perhaps the commission's most significant proposal was to discontinue the practice of returning mining rents and royalties to the regions.[24] While seemingly minor, this revenue adjustment marked the beginning of the dilution of the powers of the regions to the benefit of the national government. The struggle for control of national revenue, and therefore the national government, acquired new importance over regional strategies of revenue generation and appropriation.

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[18] See Hakeem Ibikunle TIJANI, *Britain, Leftist Nationalists and the Transfer of Power in Nigeria, 1945-1965*, New York: Routledge, 2006. For the American response and wider Cold War context, see also Monica BELMONTE, 'Reining in Revolution: The U.S Response to British Decolonization in Nigeria in an Era of Civil Rights, 1953-1960', PhD, Georgetown University, 2003.

[19] Yusuf BANGURA, *Britain and Commonwealth Africa*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983, pp. 74, 194-5.

[20] See BANGURA, *op. cit.*, p. 80; and Paul KELEMEN, 'Planning for Africa: The British Labour Party's Colonial Development Policy, 1920-1964', *Journal of Agrarian Change*, vol. 7, n° 1, January 2007, p. 95.

[21] CRONJE, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

[22] Takena TAMUNO, 'Separatist Agitations in Nigeria since 1914', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol. 8, n°4, 1979, p. 564.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 564-570; Abdul Raufa MUSTAPHA, 'The National Question and Radical Politics in Nigeria', *Review of African Political Economy*, vol. 13, n° 37, December 1986, pp. 84-85.

[24] Colonial Office, Nigeria, *Report of the Fiscal Commission*, London, 1958 ['Raisman Report']), pp. 31-32.

After independence, Nigeria lurched from one political crisis to another, usually as a result of jockeying between political parties claiming to represent one of the three major ethnic groups at the national level.[25] In response to these crises, Igbo officers engaged in a coup against the Northern-derived leadership in January 1966, resulting in the ascension of Major General Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi. Despite undertones of ethnic tension, the British High Commissioner in Nigeria, Francis Cumming-Bruce, reported that '[t]he mood up and down the country is one of reformist exaltation, and the universal rejoicing at the disappearance of politicians who have hung like a millstone round the neck of the country for fifteen years'.[26] Even in the North, there was widespread support for a purge of politicians reviled for corruption and attachment to colonial-era institutions. The Sardauna-led Northern government, in particular, was acknowledged by the Commonwealth Relations Office[27] as 'identified with the preservation of out of date feudal institutions and social backwardness.'[28] However, Cumming-Bruce fretted that the populist leanings of the new regime might sway Nigeria from its 'moderate' path in domestic and international politics. It was feared that Nigeria might take up 'fashionable African positions', sideline the large number of British officers still serving in the country, and 'become less co-operative in its foreign policies and less sensible in its attitude towards expatriate economic interests'.[29]

In the end, Ironsi's ambitious domestic agenda fatally undermined his hold on power. In a bold attempt to prevent the dissolution of the country, Ironsi appointed military governors to the four regions[30] (including Lieutenant-Colonel Chukwuemeka Ojukwu in the East) and announced his intention to transform Nigeria into a unitary state. This announcement met with fierce opposition from Northern politicians and soldiers, and in July 1966, a 'countercoup' resulted in the execution of Ironsi and the removal of his closest political supporters. Nigeria's new military leader, Lieutenant-Colonel Yakubu Gowon, faced strong pressure to allow Northern secession, and British and American representatives in Lagos both played an important role in persuading Gowon to maintain the Federation.[31] In stark

[25] For an overview of these events, see Toyin FALOLA & Matthew M. HEATON, *A History of Nigeria*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, chapter seven.
[26] The National Archives (TNA), DO 221/85, Francis Cumming-Bruce to Sir Saville Garner, 4 February 1966.
[27] The Commonwealth Relations Office (CRO) merged with the Colonial Office (CO) on 1 August 1966 to form the Commonwealth Office. Although some scholars refer to the new office as the 'CRO' as well, I have opted to refer to it by its full name in this paper to avoid confusion. Although it played an important role in the decision-making process discussed here, the Commonwealth Office proved to be relatively short-lived, and was merged with the Foreign Office (FO) on 17 October 1968 to form the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). For background on Wilson's administrative reforms in international affairs, see YOUNG, *op. cit.*, chapter one, especially pp. 10-13.
[28] TNA, DO 221/85, 6, Commonwealth Relations Office, 'Nigeria: The New Regime,' 10 February 1966.
[29] TNA, DO 221/85, Cumming-Bruce to Garner, 10 February 1966.
[30] A fourth region, the Mid-West, had been created in 1963.
[31] For British involvement, see TNA, CAB 128/41, CC(61)41st, 2 September 1966; for the United States, see *Foreign Relations of the United States*, Volume XXIV, 1964-68. 'Circular Telegram From the Department of State to All African Posts', 2 August 1966 <www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxiv/zi.html> (accessed 10 November 2012).

contrast with Ironsi, Gowon was lauded by the British High Commissioner for being 'pro-British and pro-West', someone who had 'no patience for extremist African demands and would like to help us'.[32] Indeed, it has long been speculated that Britain played a direct role in Gowon's blood-spattered ascension.[33] No archival evidence confirms this claim, but two important reports from the period were destroyed by the Prime Minister's Office in 1996 before they could be officially declassified.[34]

It is deeply ironic that Gowon was propelled to political power by Northern secessionists in opposition to pro-unity Igbos, but would spend the next three-and-a-half years resolutely defending Nigerian unity against Igbo separatists.[35] Instead of checking the centrifugal tendencies that imperilled the Federation, Gowon's rule only exacerbated them. On 29 September 1966—'Black Thursday'—mob violence broke out against Igbo shopkeepers and civil servants in the North, resulting in as many as 50,000 deaths and two million refugees.[36] This massacre, more than any other event, shattered Igbo confidence in the concept of 'One Nigeria', and effectively gave Ojukwu a popular mandate to seek secession. Still, other regions were dissatisfied with the Federation as well: at a November 1966 Constitutional Conference, only the newly-minted Mid-West region 'resolutely opposed' the introduction of a secession clause.[37] Although a measure of salvation seemed to be achieved with the signing of the Aburi agreement in January 1967, Ojukwu and Gowon soon fell out over its interpretation. By the winter of 1967, many observers—including some in the British civil service—were actively preparing for an Eastern secession.

London's initial response to Eastern secession, formally declared on 30 May 1967, has been variously described as 'equivocal and non-committal',[38] 'out of gear if not totally immobilized',[39] and a 'hedging [of] bets.'[40] Speaking to the Royal Commonwealth Society two days after the formation of Biafra, George Thomas, the Minister of State for Commonwealth Affairs, refused to condemn either party in the

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[32] TNA, PREM 13/1040, British High Commissioner to Secretary of State for Commonwealth Affairs, 7 September 1966.

[33] The Eastern Region first made this claim even before declaring secession, and pro-Biafran authors have repeated it many times since. For the most recent reiteration, see Herbert EKWE-EKWE, *Biafra Revisited*, Dakar: African Resistance, 2007.

[34] The two reports were 'The Nigerian Revolution: The first hundred days' and 'Nigeria: the military government's record,' dated 6 and 7 June 1966 respectively. They were produced shortly after the 'Unification Decree' but before the overthrow of General Ironsi; see TNA, PREM 13/1040. See also UCHE, *op. cit.*, p. 120, fn. 36.

[35] For a detailed analysis of the 1966 coups and their broader legacy for Nigerian politics, see Max SIOLLUN, *Oil, Politics and Violence: Nigeria's Military Coup Culture (1966-1976)*, New York: Algora, 2009.

[36] John STREMLAU, *The International Politics of the Civil War 1967-70*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, p. 38.

[37] Takena TAMUNO, 'Separatist Agitations in Nigeria since 1914', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol. 8, n° 4, 1979, p. 580.

[38] Herbert EKWE-EKWE, *Conflict and Intervention in Africa*, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

[39] John DE ST. JORRE, *op. cit.*, p. 296.

[40] CRONJE, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

conflict.[41] The Labour government's first statement of policy on the issue, made to the House of Commons on 6 June, meekly intoned that 'at this stage there can be no recognition of the Eastern region by ourselves,'[42] and therefore held open the possibility of recognition at a future date. Such equivocations would seem to make little sense in light of the public justifications that the British government later made for its policy. After all, if Britain was really so concerned about the 'balkanization' of Africa, why did it not condemn the secession from the start? If London felt an obligation to a 'legal' Commonwealth government, why did it not immediately affirm its support for the FMG? Analysis of the primary documents reveals that London was never as committed to the FMG during the first months of the crisis as its later pronouncements suggested. The 'equivocal and non-committal' nature of London's initial policy stemmed from a debate within the government and civil service over the best way to serve 'British interests'—particularly economic interests—amidst a highly tumultuous and uncertain series of events. This debate will be traced here through four successive stages: pre-secession deliberations; secession and the demand for loyalties; the decision to supply arms; and a turn to the 'quick kill'.

Pre-secession deliberations

Despite strong support for Gowon and a general pro-Northern tilt, British officials did not shy from warning Nigeria's new leadership very early on against measures that might exacerbate secessionist hostilities. The British government opposed the idea of excising the oil-producing areas of Calabar, Ogoja and Rivers (COR) from the predominantly Igbo areas, a Federal scheme that aimed to weaken Ojukwu. Not only did the British warn that such moves would increase the likelihood of Eastern secession and civil war,[43] they also made clear to the Federal Government that 'any injury to the British community or any damage to British interests (notably the oil installations in the Eastern Region) resulting from arbitrary methods of handling any proposed constitutional change would severely strain […] [the] relationship with Nigeria.'[44] Indeed, British officials were quietly willing to countenance a possible break with the Federal Government as early as the autumn of 1966, given the importance of Shell-BP oil installations in the East. In the event that the Eastern Region should secede, 'investments in oil in Eastern Nigeria […] could prove a decisive factor in the British government thinking'.[45]

Nevertheless, with constitutional negotiations impending, the Commonwealth Office instructed the British High Commissioner in Lagos to take a global view of 'British Interest' in Nigeria, which was predicated upon two central considerations.

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[41] STREMLAU, *op. cit.*, p. 65.
[42] *Hansard*, vol. 747, 6 July 1967, cols. 810-812.
[43] TNA, PREM 13/1040, Cumming-Bruce to Commonwealth Office, 6 September 1966.
[44] TNA, PREM 13/1040, Briefing notes for the Prime Minister for his meeting with the Nigerian High Commissioner, Brigadier Ogundipe and Mr. V. A. Adegoroye, 27 September 1966.
[45] TNA, PREM 13/1040, Briefing notes for the Prime Minister for his meeting with the Nigerian High Commissioner, Brigadier Ogundipe and Mr. V. A. Adegoroye, 28 September 1966.

The first was the familiar role that a united Nigeria played on the side of 'moderation' in African and world affairs, a role that could come undone in the event of dissolution. The second was 'extensive British commercial interests', especially the increasing importance of the oil installation in the Delta area of the Eastern Region. Here, too, secession was unpalatable, as it threatened to separate Nigeria into states 'of doubtful economic viability.'[46] As anticipated, however, it became increasingly clear that Britain's *broad* preference for a united Nigeria might clash with its *specific* commercial and investment interests. If the Federation could not be held together, the British government would have to come down one side or the other.

In mid-February 1967, the High Commission was already warning the Commonwealth Office that Britain's interests in the East were so important that the government should avoid stipulating, in advance, its attitude to a possible Eastern secession. Should the East succeed in establishing its claim, London would wish to secure friendly relations without any 'self imposed inhibitions'. Still, the High Commission acknowledged that, as long as 'the federation remains in being', it would be necessary to ensure compliance with all lawful decrees of the FMG. British companies operating in the East—and Shell-BP in particular—were therefore advised not to 'acquiesce' to any Eastern demands for revenue payments, and to strictly abide by any blockade imposed by the FMG. Such advice would be taken to heart by the Commonwealth Office, and would shape its initial reaction to Eastern secession, i.e. a 'wait and see' policy. It is especially noteworthy because it made no mention of Commonwealth obligations and bore not a trace of sentimental attachment to colonial Nigeria. Fears of 'balkanization' in Africa were also absent.[47]

The tone from Lagos changed somewhat, however, when a new British High Commissioner assumed the post in late February. Derided as a pro-Federal 'super-hawk' by Biafrans and their supporters,[48] David Hunt was well-connected with the Nigerian elite and was married to the niece of a Lagos shipping merchant.[49] Hunt had also befriended Harold Wilson at Oxford, which may help to explain the strong influence and confidence that he came to enjoy in London.[50] The documentation demonstrates that there is some validity to the claims of Biafran supporters that Hunt had an anti-Igbo and anti-Eastern bias. In the lead-up to secession, Hunt's reports on the East were characterized by sensational comparisons of Ojukwu and the Eastern Government with Adolph Hitler and the Nazis. Ojukwu, he said, 'has got the whole of the Eastern Region goose-stepping in violent demonstrations; his press and radio can only be compared to those of Nazi Germany for their deliberate pursuit of the big lie, their poisonous incitement to racial hatred and the violence of their personal

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[46] TNA, PREM 13/1040, Commonwealth Office to Lagos, 30 September 1966.
[47] TNA, PREM 13/1661, Lagos to Commonwealth Office, 18 February 1967.
[48] ST. JORRE, *op. cit.*, p. 295.
[49] Auberon WAUGH & Suzanne CRONJE, *Biafra: Britain's Shame*, London: Joseph, 1969, p. 54.
[50] ST. JORRE, *op. cit.*, p. 296. For his part, Hunt acknowledges in his memoirs that Wilson's influence played 'the decisive part in my appointment', but maintains that his personal connection was not strong. See David HUNT, *On the Spot: An Ambassador Remembers*, London: Peter Davies, 1975, p. 168.

abuse of, in particular, Gowon and Hassan'.[51] During this period, the British High Commission also compared Ojukwu to Nasser 'in his early days' and warned of Ojukwu's sympathy for socialism and the Eastern Bloc.[52] Although Hunt tended to blame Ojukwu's personal psychology for the Eastern troubles, he also suggested that paranoia 'is an Ibo characteristic'.[53]

Hunt's arrival in Lagos coincided with a secession threat by Ojukwu, issued on 25 February. Ojukwu pledged to protect the East, militarily if necessary, and to secede from the Federation by 31 March if the FMG did not implement the Aburi agreement.[54] With the possibility of secession looming, Hunt recognized the circumstantial wisdom of the 'wait and see' approach, and agreed with the Commonwealth Office that Britain should not assure Gowon that it would never recognize a break-away East.[55]

In the end, Ojukwu merely issued an edict seizing federal revenues, prompting the FMG to suspend Nigerian Airways flights and halt postal and money-order transactions. On 1 May, fears were again heightened when the Western Region's most prominent politician declared that the West would follow the East in the event of secession. In this context, the Commonwealth Office issued a paper anxiously noting that 'British interests in Nigeria are bound to suffer in the event of a break-up.' The paper pointed out that Britain enjoyed a gross turn-over of trade with Nigeria of over £180 million a year, and had invested over £200 million in the Federation (of which two-thirds was in oil, largely in the Eastern Region). The division of Nigeria would affect business confidence and terminate 'the economic advantages of a single large market'. Given this tension of interests, the Commonwealth Office concluded that '[a]n open split between the Eastern Region and the rest of Nigeria will face us with an immediate dilemma, since we cannot afford to alienate either side.' The United Kingdom should therefore seek to maintain 'informal' contact with the East, but hold off on recognition until 'other influential governments' have done so.[56]

A few days later the West and General Africa Department (WGAD) of the Commonwealth Office approved similar arguments when they were offered by authoritative Overseas Policy and Defence Committee (OPD).[57] Although the WGAD speculated that Britain would be 'strongly criticised in the rest of Africa if [she] took the lead on recognising secession,' it nevertheless reiterated that Britain's 'most important commercial interests are in the East' and that London should seek

[51] TNA, FCO 25/232, Hunt to Norris, 15 April 1967.
[52] *Ibid.* In fact, Ojukwu made no pretence to socialism and received no significant support from Communist states before or during the war. See Stanley DIAMOND, 'Who Killed Biafra?' *Dialectical Anthropology*, vol. 31, 2007, pp. 339-362. Reprinted from *New York Review of Books*, vol. 14, 26 January 1970.
[53] *Ibid.*
[54] STREMLAU, *op. cit.*, p. 51.
[55] TNA, PREM 13/1661, Lagos to Commonwealth Office, 3 March 1967.
[56] TNA, PREM 13/1661, 'Possible Blockade and Secession of Eastern Region', 5 May 1967.
[57] For some background on the OPD and its relation to the Cabinet, see YOUNG, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17.

to delay a decision.[58] Once again, the fear of 'balkanization' was not so strong as to preclude recognition of an oil-rich, secessionist East.

Like the British government, Shell-BP itself was deeply concerned about the prospect of being torn between the FMG and the East, especially over oil revenues. Consequently, the company refused to sign any agreement with the FMG that would preclude it from paying to 'another Government or authority'. However, before secession an agreement was reached, although it did not resolve the fundamental problem. Shell-BP agreed to 'consult with the Federal Government and with their agreement […] pay the amount of revenue under dispute into a special frozen account',[59] a proposal that the OPD greeted favourably.[60] However, the agreement had a gaping hole: no provision was made for a circumstance in which the FMG refused to allow for such a payment. In the event, that is exactly what occurred.

Secession and the demand for royalties

In a bid to forestall secession, Gowon made a number of 'dramatic concessions' to the East in the third week of May, including the removal of economic sanctions.[61] As a result, however, Ojukwu was emboldened rather than mollified. On 27 May, he secured an endorsement of independence from a joint meeting of the Eastern Region's Council of Elders and Consultative Assembly, a move which prompted Gowon to announce a complete reformulation of Nigerian federalism, precisely along the lines that the British previously warned against. Rather than four regions, the new federal Nigeria would be composed of twelve states, dividing the Eastern Region into three parts and leaving the Igbos with only 6 per cent of Nigeria's oil output in a rump East Central State.[62] Such a revision proved predictably unacceptable to Eastern elites, and Ojukwu finally declared the new republic of Biafra on 30 May.

Britain responded exactly as its 'wait and see' approach dictated. On 30 May, the Commonwealth Office informed the British High Commission in Lagos that no decision had yet been made on recognition, while James Parker, the District High Commissioner in the Eastern capital of Enugu, was instructed to stay on good terms with the Biafrans.[63] Somewhat uniquely for a Cold War-era crisis, the US State Department informed the Foreign Office that it had 'no intention of taking the lead' on recognition, and would cede to Commonwealth initiative.[64]

Only days after Biafra declared independence, the Six Day War broke out in the Middle East. Many conventional accounts of the Nigerian civil war maintain that the Middle East crisis simply distracted Western powers from the brewing conflict in West Africa. Stremlau, for example, claims that Nigeria was relegated to a

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[58] TNA, FCO 25/232, WGAD to Secretary of State, 11 May 1967.
[59] TNA, FCO 54/47, 20, 'Aide Memoire', n. d.
[60] TNA, FCO 38/199, O.P.D.(67)32, 11 May 1967.
[61] STREMLAU, *op. cit.*, p. 60.
[62] E. Wayne NAFZIGER, 'The Political Economy of Disintegration in Nigeria,' *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol. 11, n° 4, 1973, p. 531.
[63] TNA, PREM 13/1661, Commonwealth Office to Lagos, 30 May 1967.
[64] TNA, PREM 13/1661, Washington to Foreign Office, 30 May 1967.

'distant secondary concern'.[65] True as this may have been, it overlooks the fact that war in the Middle East magnified the importance of Nigerian oil, temporarily increasing Nigeria's relevance on the world stage.

The Six Day War prompted an Arab oil boycott of the United Kingdom and the closing of the Suez Canal. The important lifeline that Nigerian oil provided during this time was highlighted in a brief for the Minister of State. Middle Eastern oil exports now had to be transported around the Cape to Western Europe, inducing a shortage of tankers and therefore a relative shortage of oil. Meanwhile, because of an Arab oil ban on UK destinations, Britain could not rely upon short-haul oil from either Libya or Algeria. What made this relative shortage so deleterious for the British economy was the resulting price increase, drain on foreign exchange, and therefore pressure upon the balance of payments. Nigerian oil helped to relieve this pressure in two ways: Lagos remained part of the Sterling Area, and its shipments required only a fraction of the time to be transported to Britain. Whereas a round trip between Britain and Nigeria took 20 days, one between Britain and the Persian Gulf required 68. In lieu of Nigerian crude, oil companies would have to rely upon Iranian supply, with greater freight charges, or American supply, at greater cost per barrel. The resulting additional foreign exchange cost would be an estimated £1.3 million a day.[66] Overall, the Ministry of Power estimated that the additional cost to Britain's balance of payments would be £15 million, assuming a six-month Middle East crisis.[67] For a British government struggling with chronic balance of payments difficulties, this was a particularly unwelcome prospect.[68]

Indeed, the oil issue had become so crucial in early June that even the staunchly pro-Federal Hunt recognized the pre-eminent position that oil must occupy in shaping Britain's Nigeria policy:

> *In the new circumstances it must clearly be a principle object of British policy to avoid doing anything which could seriously antagonise the State of Biafra in case it is successful in vindicating its independence. Our interests, particularly in oil, are so great that they must override any lingering regret that we may feel for the disintegration of British-made Nigeria.*[69]

However, even as he acknowledged the need to stay on the Biafrans' good side in the short term, Hunt seemed to have little doubt that FMG military initiative against Biafra was the best means of securing British interests in the medium and

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[65] STREMLAU, *op. cit.*, p. 65.
[66] TNA, FCO 38/111, Secret Brief for Minister of State, 11 July 1967.
[67] TNA, FCO 38/111, Powell to Norris, 26 June 1967.
[68] For an outline of the Wilson government's difficulties with sterling and devaluation, see Tim BALE, 'Dynamics of a Non-Decision: the "Failure" to Devalue the Pound, 1964-7', *Twentieth Century British History*, vol. 10, n° 2, 1999; and R. ROY, 'The Battle for Bretton Woods: America, Britain, and the International Financial Crisis of October 1967-March 1968', *Cold War History*, vol. 2, n° 2, 2002.
[69] TNA, FCO 25/232, Lagos to Commonwealth Office [reproduced in Commonwealth Office Print of 7 July 1967].

long term. Upon Hunt's advice, the Foreign Office deleted sixteen words from a proposed letter to Gowon from Wilson. The words were: 'since a resort to force would only bring misery for persons of all races in Nigeria.'[70] Whether this omission served as a green light for FMG action can only be speculated. Still, the fact that a letter from the British Prime Minister to the Nigerian Head of State expressly *failed* to advise against military action could not have gone unnoticed in Lagos.

The British government's 'wait and see' approach had begun to unravel. The policy was originally conceived as a short-term measure to bide time while the fate of Biafra hung in the balance. As the days passed, however, the Commonwealth Office faced countervailing pressures from two directions. On one side was Hunt, who believed that a Federal military campaign against Biafra was imminent and would likely be successful. Should Britain wish to secure its stake in the Federation, it would have to demonstrate support for the FMG's military moves (necessarily alienating the Biafrans). On the other side were those who had a stronger belief in Ojukwu's capacity to defend the East and gain recognition, as well as those who wished above all to secure the continued flow of Biafran oil.

The dispute came to a head over the issue of oil royalties. On 21 June, Biafra released a decree calling upon companies operating in the East to pay royalties to its government. At that time, Shell-BP had already paid harbour dues to both sides (effectively a double payment), but it could not afford to pay royalties to both sides as well.[71] Hunt made clear his 'impression…that [Shell-BP General Manager Stanley] Gray personally believes that Ojukwu can succeed in establishing Biafra.' Seeking to avoid an eventual nationalisation of Shell-BP, Gray would feel compelled to cast his lot with Ojukwu and sign revenues over to the Biafrans. Hunt, in contrast, asserted that 'the odds are slightly in favour of the F.M.G.' and that the British government should advise Shell-BP that the best option was to remain faithful to its agreement with the central government.[72] He also believed that a Nigerian blockade would be relatively effective in bringing the East 'to its knees' within two or three months.[73]

Hunt's attitude was not borne of indifference for Shell-BP's plight, or of disregard for the UK's balance of payments problems. Rather, it was predicated on the belief that oil flow would be stopped *regardless* of whether royalties were paid to the FMG or Biafra; therefore, the balance of interests favoured payment to the FMG because it was the stronger party and such payment would carry less attendant risks for Britain's international and regional position:

> *I realise we are now faced with a serious situation aggravated by Middle East troubles, and that it is likely, whatever decision is taken, that flow of crude will be stopped either by Ojukwu or Gowon. It is, I submit, slightly more serious to offend Gowon because to collaberate*

[70] TNA, PREM 13/1661, Commonwealth Office to Lagos, 31 May 1967.
[71] TNA, FCO 54/47, Enugu to Commonwealth Office, 21 June 1967.
[72] TNA, FCO 38/110, Lagos to Commonwealth Office, 22 June 1967.
[73] TNA, FCO 38/110, Lagos to Commonwealth Office, 23 June 1967

> *[sic] with Ojukwu would prejudice us with other African states with memories of Katanga.*[74]

What is notable about Hunt's reference to the legacy of Katanga is its status of *secondary* importance to oil. If either Biafra or the FMG could be relied upon to secure the flow of oil, the calculus would presumably change. Hunt recommended that Shell-BP pay royalties to the FMG. However, should Shell decide to pay to the Biafrans, Hunt urged that they 'at least put off the evil day by fourth week in July.'[75] Interestingly, in a subsequent meeting with Shell officials, Gowon did not give any indication that he would blockade Biafra if Shell-BP made a payment to Ojukwu. In fact, he seemed to suggest that the FMG would be willing to work with the oil company regardless.[76] It seems possible that Gowon was deliberately misleading Shell, perhaps hoping that a royalty payment to the East would provide a *casus belli* for blockading and attacking Biafra.[77]

In London, the Commonwealth Office opted for the middle ground, and pressed senior Shell and BP executives to follow through on the original plan of paying any royalties into a suspense account. In fact, the oil executives initially agreed to do so, but reversed course when Ojukwu warned that 'firm and positive action would follow in the event of non-compliance'.[78] Whatever Shell-BP's expectations, its decision to make a token payment of £125,000 to the East on 1 July alienated both Gowon and Ojukwu. In Enugu, Parker reported that Ojukwu was 'offended' by the minimal payment, having expected at least £2 million.[79] For its part, the FMG informed the British High Commission on 2 July that it would now extend its blockade to oil tankers leaving and entering Bonny, effectively prohibiting all oil exports.[80] On 6 July, the FMG launched a so-called 'police action' against Biafra, inaugurating the civil war.

The decision to supply arms

Although it was anticipated, the FMG's oil blockade deeply distressed the British government. Nigerian oil constituted 10 per cent of British imports at the time of the Arab boycott, and its loss had a highly deleterious effect upon the balance of payments. In his memoirs, Wilson maintained that this loss contributed to the decision to devalue the pound in November,[81] a claim confirmed by scholars.[82] Thus, the British were at first very reluctant to extend military supplies to the Nigerians, especially when certain requested items (for example, Seaward Defence

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[74] TNA, FCO 38/110, Lagos to Commonwealth Office, 23 June 1967.
[75] *Ibid.*
[76] TNA, FCO 38/111, Lagos to Commonwealth Office, 26 June 1967.
[77] CRONJE, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
[78] Ojukwu made this threat in a 29 June meeting with Gray. See TNA, FCO 38/110, fo. 82, Steel to Hetherington, 'Secret Memorandum on Nigeria', 3 July 1967.
[79] TNA, FCO 54/47, Enugu to Commonwealth Office, 2 July 1967.
[80] TNA, FCO 38/111, Lagos to Commonwealth Office, 2 July 1967.
[81] Harold WILSON, *The Labour Government 1964-1970*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971, p. 400.
[82] Saki DOCKRILL, *Britain's Retreat from East of Suez: The Choice Between Europe and the World*? London: Palgrave, 2002, p. 199.

Boats) would be directly used to implement the blockade. Meanwhile, Britain's Defence Advisor in Nigeria warned strongly against the provision of arms, given the FMG's willingness to flout international law by firing upon, and even sinking, stubborn ships. According to the advisor, 'they are an irresponsible government for whom it would be folly for us to entrust any further supplies of arms.'[83] Despite these fears, however, Britain decided rather early on to provide Lagos with weapons and other military supplies.

In the existing literature, the British decision is explained by recourse to a number of factors. Stremlau repeats Hunt's claim that Britain merely continued its role as Nigeria's 'traditional' arms supplier.[84] St. Jorre links the decision to knowledge of Soviet supplies reaching Lagos in August.[85] Cronje maintains that 'the British Government decided that additional supplies would be required if the federal side was to carry through its campaign.'[86] All authors locate the decision sometime in August 1967. However, the archives reveal that the decision was made a month earlier, in early July, and that it was intimately tied to the oil question. A 7 July note from the Commonwealth Office to Michael Palliser, Private Secretary to the Prime Minister, suggested that provision of jet aircraft and patrol boats had been ruled out, but that anti-aircraft guns should be made available if 'Gowon is helpful on oil.' The Commonwealth Office *initially* intended to use arms supplies as a bargaining chip to ease the oil blockade.[87]

Britain immediately sent Minister of State for Commonwealth Affairs, George Thomas, to meet Gowon in Lagos. At the meeting, held on 8 July 1967, Thomas forcefully maintained that the oil blockade was illegal under international law, and that oil companies could not be blamed if they decided to pay royalties to Biafra, for it was the government in effective control of a disputed territory. He also warned that the blockade would only prove counterproductive for the Federal Government's own aims. While doing nothing to weaken the Biafran rebels, it could damage the future financial prospects of Nigeria itself. By potentially forcing Britain to ration oil supplies, moreover, the blockade would erode goodwill toward Nigeria in Britain. In the end, Thomas failed to obtain any concessions from Gowon, exposing the weakness of British leverage over its former colony. Once it was realized that London was essentially powerless to force a resumption of oil flow, the 'wait and see' approach of sitting on the fence was exhausted. British policy-makers now had to assess the longer term implications of a protracted conflict between the Federal Government and Biafra. Only a week after Thomas's failed diplomatic mission, the Commonwealth Office informed Palliser that 'some of Gowon's advisers' were pressing him to take reprisals against Shell-BP for its token payment to Ojukwu. Thus, 'we have extra reason just now to show that our differences with them over oil

[83] TNA, FCO 38/199, Anderson to High Commission, 7 July 1967.
[84] STREMLAU, *op. cit.*, p. 76; HUNT, *op. cit.*, pp. 179-182.
[85] ST. JORRE, *op. cit.*, p. 302. Primary documents reveal that London did indeed become aware of Soviet arms shipments in August, but this knowledge 'did not create any panic […] nor lead to any immediate change in arms policy.' See YOUNG, *op. cit.*, p. 203.
[86] CRONJE, *op. cit.*, p. 41.
[87] TNA, PREM 13/1661, Forster to Palliser, 7 July 1967.

do not mean any general hardening in our attitude'.[88] Where goodwill was once being demanded of Nigeria, it was now Britain that was obliged to demonstrate the same. The Commonwealth Office advocated not only the sale of anti-aircraft guns, but also provision of the previously denied Seaward Defence Boats and the sale, through Crown Agents, of 'reasonable quantities of minor weapons and supplies.'[89] Wilson communicated Britain's new position to Gowon by letter on 16 July.[90]

London's initial decision to supply weapons to the FMG, therefore, was predicated neither upon the Russian threat, nor strictly upon Britain's 'traditional' role as a supplier. Instead, it was motivated by a desire to safeguard Shell-BP's future position in the Federation. Since the FMG would not be budged from its decision to blockade Eastern oil, the British government shifted its priority from a short-term safeguarding of oil supply to a long-term safeguarding of fixed oil (and other) investments. The government even stepped in to prevent Shell-BP's 'token' payment to Ojukwu. On 14 July, the Commonwealth Office informed Lagos that the Treasury had held up transfer of the necessary foreign exchange for 'political reasons.'[91] Britain finally abandoned the 'wait and see' approach—but as we will see, this shift did not yet amount to full material backing for the 'One Nigeria' policy.

At first, Britain's decision to provide limited military backing to Nigeria's war effort yielded the expected dividends. Federal troops initially enjoyed strong military successes against the Biafrans, and on 25 July they seized the Bonny oil terminal—home to one of Shell-BP's most valuable installations. Commonwealth Secretary George Thomson became so confident in a Federal victory that he wrote to Wilson, excitedly anticipating negotiations between a 'victorious FMG and a vanquished "Biafra."'[92] However, the military situation changed dramatically on 9 August, when Ojukwu ordered a surprise attack into the Mid-West region and made stunning territorial gains. By 18 August, the Biafran forces were a mere 135 miles from Lagos.[93]

This reversal of fortune strongly shook the Commonwealth Office's confidence in the very policy it so recently adopted. In an 18 August paper to Wilson, Thomas outlined his conception of British interests with a frankness that deserves extended quotation:

> *The sole immediate British interest in Nigeria is that the Nigerian economy should be brought back to a condition in which our substantial trade and investment in the country can be further developed, and particularly so that we can gain access to important oil installations.*
> *Our only direct interest in the maintenance of the Federation is that Nigeria has been developed as an economic unit, and any disruption of*

[88] TNA, PREM 13/1661, Forster to Palliser, 14 July 1967.
[89] *Ibid.*
[90] TNA, PREM 13/1361, Commonwealth Office to Lagos, 16 July 1967.
[91] TNA, FCO 38/111, fo. 153, Commonwealth Office to Lagos, 14 July 1967.
[92] TNA, PREM 13/1661, Thomson to Wilson, 8 August 1967.
[93] STREMLAU, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

> *this would have adverse effects on trade and development. Provided economic unity can be preserved, we have no direct interest in how this is done. The break-up of Nigeria into several independent States would not necessarily be adverse to our interests provided that full economic cooperation were maintained between them. Indeed, to the extent that a break-up produced a more stable political arrangement, it might in the long term even be to our advantage.*[94]

Thomas suggested that Britain did not have to rely upon a clear-cut FMG victory, or even the political framework of 'Nigerian unity', to safeguard its principal—i.e., economic—interest in Nigeria. So long as economic unity between politically autonomous parts could be achieved, there was no reason for the United Kingdom to be prejudicial to any one potential arrangement. According to Thomas, London's Nigeria policy should promote negotiation between the parties with the aim of quickly ending the fighting and producing a viable framework for economic cooperation. To this end, he proposed that Britain launch 'an immediate peace offensive' designed to stop the fighting and to get the two sides talking. As a corollary of this initiative, arms supplies would be stopped 'completely'.[95]

Hunt strenuously opposed the proposal, arguing that such an initiative would have very little chance of success and unnecessarily disturb British-Nigerian relations at a very crucial juncture. Hunt's 'on the spot' authority, coupled perhaps with the personal confidence invested in him by the Prime Minister, ensured that his advice won out, and Thomas's proposal was quickly shelved.[96] However, it is interesting to speculate about what may have happened had Thomas's proposal been adopted. The chance of success for any 'peace initiative' may have been slim, and such an initiative would certainly have damaged Nigerian-British relations at least in the near term. Moreover, even with an arms embargo it is still possible that the war could have continued without externally supplied military equipment. The Biafrans were certainly masterful at producing their own weapons, and the FMG had a munitions plant of its own in Kaduna.[97] Still, an embargo would doubtlessly have made the prosecution of the war more difficult and weakened the resolve of both sides. Cronje suggests that 'without external supplies the damage inflicted would have been limited, and outright victory on the battlefield difficult to envisage.'[98] This is no small matter in a war that killed as many as three million.[99]

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[94] TNA, PREM 13/1662, Thomas to Prime Minister, 18 August 1967.
[95] *Ibid.*
[96] TNA, PREM 13/1662, Palliser to Macleod, 23 August 1967.
[97] CRONJE, *op. cit.*, p. 45.
[98] *Ibid.*, p. 45.
[99] See Eghosa OSAGHAE, *Crippled Giant: Nigeria Since Independence*, London: Hurst & Co., 1998, p. 69; FALOLA & HEATON, *op. cit.*, p. 158.The most frequently cited death toll statistic is one million. Still, there are dissenters. In his memoirs, the former British High Commissioner to Nigeria, David Hunt, claims that 'total casualties' numbered only 100,000 (*On the Spot*, p. 190). Young suggests a similar figure, citing *post-facto* Red Cross estimates of 50-100,000 deaths (see YOUNG, *op. cit.*, p. 193).

A turn to the 'quick kill'

Instead, British policy evolved further and further away from the prospect of genuine negotiation and arms limitation. With the closing of the District High Commission in Enugu, Britain lost its last direct diplomatic link with Biafra. As Nigerian forces amassed battlefield successes throughout the fall, their victories found a direct reflection in the Commonwealth Office. In early November, Thomas dramatically shifted his posture from dove to hawk, urging that Wilson support not a 'peace offensive,' but a final Federal military offensive. In motivating this change, he maintained that the 'key to the fighting lies in Port Harcourt.' Its capture would deny Ojukwu his last significant link with the outside world, and the last airfield capable of taking major supplies. Port Harcourt, of course, was also the site of Shell-BP's oil installations. Consequently, Thomas suggested that Britain relax its arms supply policy, so as to go from supplying 'relatively small quantities of small arms' to 'reasonable quantities.'[100] The Cabinet endorsed this strategy in short order, which it christened as the 'quick kill.' An OPD minute of 22 November observed:

> *The situation has now changed. On the one hand, the FMG seem likely to win in the long run. This would be in our interests. The FMG are better disposed to us than the East; their victory should lead to a restoration of oil supplies in due course. On the other hand, Colonel Ojukwu is now implacably hostile to us, is getting large supplies of arms from the Continent, and may be trying to raise a force of mercenaries.*[101]

This was a true turning point for British strategy. Ojukwu could never be a dependable partner for the British; and, as Commonwealth Secretary George Thomson would note a few months later, 'in the unlikely event of Biafra succeeding in obtaining international recognition as an independent state, Shell/B.P. might find their concession revoked altogether by the Biafrans and offered to some non-British company instead.'[102] Gray's refusal in the spring of the following year to pay any royalties to Biafra, despite Ojukwu's threat to take 'irrevocable steps', indicates that Shell-BP had also definitively thrown in its lot with the FMG.[103] Indeed, in December 1967, Gowon requested that Shell-BP pay its royalty of £5.5 million in advance, providing much needed sterling for the purchase of British weapons. The company even proposed, on its own initiative, to pay £1.25 million in income tax which was not yet due.[104] All players now converged on a 'One Nigeria' policy, with a 'quick kill' of the Biafran rebels. This was, of course, Gowon's explicit aim from the very beginning; but it was fully accepted by both the British government and Shell-BP once it became clear that only the abject defeat of the Biafrans would ensure the maintenance of Shell-BP's investments, and—crucially for Britain—a resumption of Nigerian oil flow.

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[100] TNA, PREM 13/1661, Thomas to Prime Minister, 8 November 1967.
[101] TNA, CAB 148, OPD(67)86, 22 November 1967.
[102] TNA, POWE 63/406, 4, Thomson to Prime Minister, 6 February 1968.
[103] TNA, FCO 25/232, Lagos to Commonwealth Office, 19 March 1968.
[104] TNA, FCO 38/113, fo. 292, Confidential Memorandum from the High Commission Lagos, 15 December 1967.

The significance of generous arms sales to the FMG, in this context, went far beyond diplomatic courtesy. By directly enhancing the Nigerian military's coercive capacity, British weapons became a pivot for harmonizing the various political-economic interests that were thrown into conflict at the outset of the war: 'Anything we do now to assist the F.M.G. should help our oil companies to re-establish and expand their activities in Nigeria after the war, and, more generally, should help our commercial and political relationship with post-war Nigeria.'[105] What is more, arms sale were identified as an economic interest in their own right. In a 4 December note to Defence Secretary Denis Healey, Thomson urged that a 'favourable response to [the FMG's arms] request ought to give us every chance of re-establishing ourselves again as the main supplier of the Nigerian forces after the war. Provided the war ends reasonably soon, the Nigerian economy ought to recover and be able to expand again, and there should be valuable business to be done.'[106]

Thus, while Britain did not sell arms to Nigeria because it was the country's 'traditional supplier', it certainly did so to bolster its status as a reliable current and *future* supplier. This motivation, of course, was the opposite of what government officials publicly claimed. That London was willing to commit to such an effort, in turn, further highlights the importance of not simply economic interests, but the mutual alignment of these interests at the close of 1967, when 'One Nigeria' was at last fully endorsed by all relevant British policy-makers and by Shell-BP.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that the British government preferred the status quo of a united and 'moderate' Nigeria to the prospect of a multitude of potentially radical nationalist successor states. This was, after all, a status quo that British officials laboriously moulded in concert with Nigerian elites in the period of late colonialism through to Gowon's coup. When the status quo became untenable, often because of the conflicting ambitions of these same elites, London's politicians and civil servants were forced identify the most pertinent interests in Nigeria and devise strategies for their defence. It is important to note that officials regarded economic interests as primary, but even more essential to acknowledge that oil interests—Shell-BP's substantial investments and the flow of crude they produced—were especially important. Thus, despite later rhetoric about hallowed Commonwealth obligations and the sobering precedent of Katanga, the UK government was very much willing to consider recognition of an independent Eastern government, should one prove 'viable'. The resulting 'wait and see' policy acquired renewed relevance as the Six Day War and Arab oil boycott elevated the macroeconomic significance of oil from the Niger Delta.

Gowon's decision to impose his own blockade on Eastern oil, maintained even in the face of strong British diplomatic pressure, forced an end to the 'wait and see' policy. With the flow of oil now a closed issue, the future status of Shell-BP oil installations assumed primary importance. With Hunt's assurance that the FMG possessed the military capacity to defeat Biafra, the British government agreed to

[105] TNA, PREM 13/1661, Thomson to Healey, 4 December 1967.
[106] *Ibid.*

provide significant arms to Lagos—months before the prospect of Russian rivalry entered as a significant concern. Still, this was not yet an unequivocal endorsement of the 'One Nigeria' policy by all. The opinion of Commonwealth minister George Thomas, in particular, vacillated along with the relative fortunes of the Federal forces. His September proposal for a 'peace offensive' represented the last significant attempt to achieve some accommodation between Lagos and Enugu that would nevertheless be amenable to the full spectrum of British economic interests. Thereafter, only the unquestioned defeat of the Biafrans—the 'quick kill'—would guarantee the long-term security of Britain's investment in Eastern oil. As the quick kill became a slow death for hundreds of thousands of Biafrans in 1968, however, the Wilson government was faced with the rather difficult talk of explaining how its sordid role had nothing at all to do with oil interests. By that stage, both the Soviets and the French had entered the picture as shadowy but nevertheless very real factors in the civil war.

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La Grande-Bretagne, les pays ACP et les négociations pour la Convention de Lomé (1973-1975)

Guia MIGANI
Université de Louvain

Lors des négociations pour le traité sur la Communauté économique européenne (CEE), signé à Rome en 1957, la France avait fait de l'association de ses colonies une condition *sine qua non* pour son adhésion au Marché commun. Lors de la conclusion des négociations, il avait été établi que les colonies françaises, belges, la Somalie sous tutelle italienne et certains territoires d'outremer néerlandais bénéficieraient d'un Fonds de développement, appelé le Fonds européen de développement (FED), destiné à financer les investissements économiques et sociaux. Par ailleurs, les barrières tarifaires et douanières entre les Six et les territoires associés seraient progressivement abolies jusqu'à l'instauration d'une zone de libre-échange eurafricaine. Ces deux mesures, le FED et la création d'une zone de libre-échange, figuraient dans une Convention d'association fixée pour une durée de cinq ans.

Arrivée à son terme en 1962, l'association avait été rénovée par les pays africains désormais indépendants et les Six, qui, en juillet 1963, s'étaient retrouvé à Yaoundé au Cameroun pour signer les nouveaux accords[1]. La signature de la Convention, prévue pour décembre 1962, avait été retardée par les Pays-Bas et l'Italie pour protester contre le veto du Général de Gaulle contre l'entrée de la Grande-Bretagne dans la CEE. La Convention de Yaoundé avait ensuite été renouvelée une deuxième fois en 1969, malgré les protestations d'une bonne partie des pays du Tiers Monde (dont ceux qui étaient membres du Commonwealth) à l'encontre des préférences accordées par les Six aux produits des pays associés, les critiques des États-Unis et les hésitations de l'Allemagne et des Pays-Bas qui auraient préféré une politique de coopération plus mondialiste. En fait, face à la

[1] Sur les relations eurafricaines dans les années 1960, voir Gérard BOSSUAT & Marie-Thèrese BITSCH (dir.), *De l'idée d'Eurafrique à la convention de Lomé I, histoire d'une relation ambiguë*, Bruxelles : Bruylant, 2005 ; William I. ZARTMAN, *The Politics of Trade Negotiations between Africa and the European Economic Community: the Weak Confront the Strong*, Princeton : Princeton University Press, 1971. Sur les débuts d'une politique européenne de coopération au développement, Guia MIGANI*, La France et l'Afrique subsaharienne, 1957-1963 : histoire d'une décolonisation entre idéaux eurafricains et politique de puissance,* Bruxelles : Peter Lang, 2008. Sur la politique européenne de coopération au développement en général, Enzo R. GRILLI, *The European Community and the Developing Countries*, Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1993.

perspective d'une adhésion britannique à la CEE[2], Paris avait fait du renouvellement de la Convention de Yaoundé un point fort de sa politique. Du point de vue français, il fallait tout d'abord préserver les garanties des pays déjà associés avant de trouver une solution pour les pays en développement du Commonwealth. Londres, par contre, avait toujours insisté sur le fait qu'il fallait mettre sur le même plan les pays associés et les pays du Commonwealth.

L'objectif de cet article est d'analyser la position britannique lors des négociations qui mènent à la conclusion de la Convention de Lomé signée par la CEE et 46 pays d'Afrique, des Caraïbes et du Pacifique. Lomé renouvelle profondément la politique de coopération et d'aide au développement de la CEE. Il s'agit ainsi de voir quel rôle Londres a joué, quelles étaient ses priorités, si et comment la Grande-Bretagne a réussi à obtenir un certain nombre de garanties pour les pays en développement du Commonwealth, et notamment pour ses partenaires africains.

Le Commonwealth et le Marché commun européen

Lors des négociations pour l'adhésion britannique à la CEE, le problème des relations entre le Commonwealth et l'organisation européenne avait été largement débattu. La question, assez complexe étant donné le nombre de pays membres du Commonwealth ainsi que leurs différences, est initialement résolue à travers un compromis. Un Protocole attaché à l'acte d'adhésion britannique à la CEE établit que les pays du Commonwealth, dont la structure économique et sociale est comparable à celle des pays déjà associés, ont la possibilité entre :

1. participer aux négociations pour le renouvellement de la Convention de Yaoundé qui viendra à son terme en 1975 ;
2. négocier avec la CEE un simple traité commercial ;
3. conclure un traité comportant des droits et devoirs réciproques, sur la base du modèle de la Convention d'Arusha, signée entre la CEE et trois pays de l'Afrique de l'Est (Kenya, Ouganda et Tanzanie) en 1969.

Tout au long des négociations, le fait que seulement une partie du Commonwealth peut adhérer aux Conventions avec la CEE, conditionne la position de Londres[3] : pour les Britanniques, leur contribution au financement des

[2] L'ouverture des négociations avec Londres avait été décidée lors du Sommet de La Haye en 1969. Sur les négociations et l'adhésion britannique à la CEE, entre autres, N. Piers LUDLOW, *Dealing with Britain: The Six and the First UK Membership Application*, Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1997; Helen PARR, *Britain's Policy Towards the European Community: Harold Wilson And Britain's World Role, 1964-1967*, London: Routledge, 2006; Stephen GEORGE*, An Awkward Partner; Britain in the European Community,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994. Sur le Commonwealth et l'Europe, voir Alex MAY (dir.), *Britain the Commonwealth and Europe: the Commonwealth and Britain's Applications to Join the European Communities,* Basingstoke: Palgrave 2001; Harold MACMILLAN*, Britain, the Commonwealth and Europe,* London: Conservative and Unionist Central Office, 1962.

[3] « We believe that [the option I of the Protocol 22] offers the Associables the best opportunity of securing for themselves the most favorable treatment from the Community as

instruments de la nouvelle Convention dépendra, au final, du nombre du pays du Commonwealth qui en bénéficieront[4]. Londres identifie alors un certain nombre de questions susceptibles d'influencer l'attitude des pays du Commonwealth, comme il est explicitement affirmé dans le document suivant, résumant la position du gouvernement :

> *Nous voulons que les pays associables choisissent Yaoundé parce que c'est ce qui sera le plus à même d'instaurer la meilleure relation possible entre nous et les associables et de conduire à une amélioration de la Convention de Yaoundé. […] Comment pouvons-nous influencer leur décision ? De leur point de vue, les questions principales seront (a) leur conviction que Yaoundé est un instrument néo-colonial (b) les conditions commerciales, particulièrement la question des 'préférences inverses' ou la réciprocité (c) les possibilités d'accords sur les produits (d) les perspectives d'aide*[5].

Cependant, Londres veut aussi négocier une Convention qui soit compatible avec les intérêts des pays du Commonwealth exclus des négociations, notamment les pays du Sud-Est asiatique. Le gouvernement britannique s'efforce ainsi de modifier les caractéristiques de la politique de coopération communautaire dans un sens plus mondialiste. Londres insiste pour que les aides communautaires soient mises à la disposition de l'ensemble du Tiers Monde et pour mettre fin aux discriminations contre les pays tiers, inhérentes au régime d'association. Cette volonté mondialiste s'accentue quand le parti travailliste arrive au pouvoir en mars 1974. Les négociations sont même momentanément interrompues parce que Londres refuse à la Commission un nouveau mandat pour poursuivre les discussions.

Les craintes des Britanniques sur la non-participation des pays du Commonwealth ne sont pas sans raison. En réalité, les pays du Commonwealth ont une opinion assez négative de la Convention de Yaoundé. À leur avis, celle-ci ne

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regards both trade and aid; and (b) unless a good proportion of the Commonwealth Associables become parties to the new Yaoundé Convention we shall find ourselves after January 1975 increasingly drawn into a closer relationship of our political and commercial interests in Commonwealth countries in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific. », The National Archives (TNA), FCO 30/1709, FCO Memorandum, 29 mars 1973.

[4] « We cannot say to the French, or anyone else, that our attitude to renewal of the Yaoundé Convention as a whole will be dependent on the number of Commonwealth countries wishing to join the association, because we are committed by our treaty of accession to pursue the policy of association. But I told Chapperon [le chef de Cabinet du Commissaire au développement] in February that our attitude to many of the details of the new Convention would be sound to be governed to an important degree by the number of Commonwealth Associables who chose association. » TNA, FCO 30/1262, Robinson to Le Quesne, 12 juillet 1972.

[5] « We want the Associables to choose Yaoundé because this is likely to lead to the best relationship available between us and the Associables and because this is likely to lead to a better Yaoundé convention. […] How we can influence their decision? The main issues for them will be (a) their belief that Yaoundé is an instrument of neo-colonialism (b) trade conditions, particularly the issue of "reverse preferences" or reciprocity (c) the prospects for commodity agreements (d) aid prospects. » TNA, FCO 30/1266, Protocol 22 of the treaty of accession, n. d.

permet pas un développement équilibré des pays associés, car elle stimule seulement la production agricole ou l'exportation de matières premières. Par ailleurs, la zone de libre-échange eurafricaine et les préférences inverses, c'est-à-dire les préférences accordées par les pays africains aux produits européens, sont vues comme un résidu de l'époque coloniale. Encouragés par le Secrétaire général du Commonwealth, Arnold Smith, les pays associables du Commonwealth envisagent des négociations sur des bases entièrement nouvelles. D'ailleurs, Smith, craignant de voir son organisation éclater à cause de l'association à la CEE d'une partie seulement du Commonwealth, insiste pour que les pays associables négocient un accord qui ne soit pas discriminatoire envers les pays tiers. En particulier, il encourage les États associables à refuser les termes du choix qui leur est proposé et à envisager un accord complètement différent[6]. L'activisme de Smith est un problème pour les Britanniques qui ne partagent pas ses positions et qui estiment qu'il est en train de donner au Commonwealth des informations déformées sur le régime d'association.

Pour contrer la politique de Smith, les Britanniques cherchent à s'appuyer sur Robert Gardiner, le Secrétaire général de la Commission des Nations Unies pour l'Afrique. Les Britanniques demandent ainsi à Gardiner de rattraper certaines « gaffes » diplomatiques de Smith envers les pays associés, et d'inciter les pays africains à participer aux négociations pour le renouvellement de Yaoundé[7]. En effet, Gardiner a une position différente de celle de Smith. Sans être un défenseur des accords de Yaoundé, il voit favorablement la possibilité que la presque totalité des pays africains négocient le même type d'accord avec la CEE. De cette façon, pourrait prendre fin la division de l'Afrique entre pays associés et non-associés. Par conséquent, avec l'aide financière de Londres[8], Gardiner agit pour diffuser parmi les pays africains de nouvelles études sur les conséquences du régime d'association et pour favoriser le dialogue entre pays francophones (associés) et pays anglophones (non-associés). Dans ce contexte, une position clé est celle du Nigeria, qui, par sa taille et son importance, est susceptible d'influencer un bon nombre d'autres pays du Commonwealth africain. Or, Londres sait que le Nigeria ne voit pas d'un bon œil l'association à la CEE et que ses relations avec la France sont difficiles. La stratégie du gouvernement britannique est ainsi de faire reconnaître au Nigeria un statut spécial parmi les pays associables, en l'incitant à prendre la tête de ce groupe de façon à l'impliquer dans les négociations.

Les négociations entre pays africains associés et associables se déroulent entre 1972 et 1973 sous le patronage de la Communauté économique pour l'Afrique (CEA) et de l'Organisation de l'Unité Africaine (OUA). Grâce à une série de conférences, les pays africains, malgré leurs nombreuses différences et une certaine méfiance réciproque[9], arrivent à élaborer une position commune. Particulièrement

[6] TNA, FCO 30/1690, FCO to Accra, 15 février 1973.
[7] TNA, FCO 30/1688, Instructions for the UK Embassy in Addis Ababa, 'EEC Association and ECA', 1 janvier 1973.
[8] *Ibid.*
[9] Guia MIGANI, « La Communauté économique européenne et la Commission économique pour l'Afrique de l'ONU : la difficile convergence de deux projets de développement pour le continent africain (1958-1963) », *Journal of European Integration History,* n° 1(2007), p. 133-146.

importante est la conférence de l'OUA à Addis Abeba en mai 1973 pendant laquelle les pays africains s'accordent sur les principes qui doivent servir de base aux rapports avec la CEE[10]. Également décisive est la conférence de Lagos qui se tient en juillet 1973 et permet de rallier définitivement le Nigeria aux nouvelles négociations. Lors de la Conférence de Lagos, le ministre du Commerce nigérian, W. Briggs, est même choisi comme porte-parole unique du groupe africain.

Les Neuf et les pays associables du Commonwealth

De leur côté, les pays membres de la CEE s'opposent sur la nécessité d'obtenir des pays associables qu'ils choisissent au préalable le type d'accords qu'ils souhaitent négocier avec la CEE. Pour Paris, les associables doivent prendre clairement position : « pas de choix – pas de négociation », déclare le représentant français à Bruxelles[11]. La France, qui vise à préserver l'acquis communautaire de la politique d'association, est bien décidée à imposer ce choix. Dans le cas où les pays associables auraient choisi de participer aux négociations pour le renouvellement de la Convention de Yaoundé, ils se seraient retrouvés dans un cadre bien défini, structuré par les conventions précédentes. En fait, tout en étant favorable à la participation des pays du Commonwealth à l'association – qui de cette façon aurait perdu le caractère trop francophone qui lui était souvent reproché – Paris ne souhaite pas de modifications importantes.

À la France s'oppose la Grande-Bretagne, qui veut impliquer dans les négociations le plus grand nombre possible de pays du Commonwealth, et est donc peu soucieuse d'imposer des conditions ou des préalables. La crainte des Britanniques est que les pays associables obtiennent un traitement moins favorable que les associés de la première heure. Le gouvernement britannique insiste ainsi pour que les pays associables participent aux négociations pour le renouvellement de la Convention de Yaoundé, parce que cela leur donnera les meilleures possibilités pour modifier le contenu de la nouvelle convention[12]. De toute façon, Londres considère que les Neuf ne doivent pas demander aux pays associables de choisir : « Ce serait contraire à la philosophie exprimée dans le Mémorandum de la Commission, selon laquelle les négociations doivent être ouvertes »[13].

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[10] Droit du libre accès au Marché commun pour toutes les exportations africaines, y compris agricoles, droit à l'assistance technique et financière de la CEE, garantie de prix stables et rémunérateurs pour les principales exportations des pays africains, droit à la non-réciprocité dans le domaine des échanges commerciaux.

[11] Ministère des Affaires étrangères français (MAE), De-Ce, 1099, télégramme 1235-1252, Bruxelles, 11 avril 1973.

[12] « The OAU Council of Ministers meeting in Addis Ababa in late May endorsed the Abidjan declaration recommending that African relations with the EEC should be based on the principle of non-reciprocity. The Anglophones and Francophones are thus holding well together. It is important that they continue to do so, for it is by carrying the Francophones with them that the Commonwealth countries stand the best chance of getting what they want in the new Convention. » TNA, FCO 30/1695, 'Protocol 22 negotiations', n. d.

[13] « That would be contrary to the philosophy expressed in the Commission's Memorandum that the negotiations should be open », TNA, FCO 30/1695, EEC Council of Ministers meeting, 25-26 June 1973, Provisional agenda, Preparation of the conference on 25-26 July 1973, juin 1973.

En juillet 1973, à la veille de la conférence de Bruxelles qui devait ouvrir les négociations, Alec Douglas-Home, ministre des Affaires étrangères britannique, expose les priorités dans une lettre à son Premier Ministre : toute division entre pays associés et associables doit être évitée, parce que cela amènerait à privilégier les premiers. Cette différence de traitement aurait provoqué des tensions non seulement parmi les pays africains mais aussi entre les Neuf. Pour éviter une telle division, il était nécessaire de présenter des propositions acceptables pour les pays du Commonwealth. De ce point de vue, le facteur discriminant est l'obligation d'accorder des préférences tarifaires aux pays de la CEE, point auquel les pays du Commonwealth sont majoritairement opposés. L'autre question, liée à la précédente, est celle du choix entre les différentes options offertes par la Communauté que les Français souhaitaient poser aux pays du Commonwealth lors de la conférence de Bruxelles. En fait, suivant le Protocole 22 inclus dans l'acte d'adhésion britannique à la CEE, les pays du Commonwealth avaient la possibilité de choisir entre la participation aux négociations pour le renouvellement de Yaoundé et la conclusion de deux autres types de traité : « Ces deux questions sont liées : aux yeux des Français, une décision rapide conduira à séparer le bon grain de l'ivraie ; augmentera les chances que le bon grain propose la réciprocité ; et scindera également le groupe des pays du Protocole 22 [c'est-à-dire les pays associables du Commonwealth] en deux groupes, ce que nous avons, depuis le départ, essayé d'éviter. »[14] Par conséquent, Londres estime qu'il ne faut absolument pas exercer de pression sur les pays du Commonwealth. Il n'est pas non plus nécessaire d'arriver à la Conférence avec une position commune : « Nous ne sommes pas pressés », affirme Douglas-Home. La meilleure stratégie est d'offrir aux pays associables et associés la possibilité d'exprimer leur attentes par rapport à la nouvelle Convention, tout en déclarant que la Communauté était encore en train de chercher une position commune sur certaines questions[15].

De leur côté, les autres pays membres de la CEE sont partagés : les Néerlandais et les Danois se rejoignent plutôt sur les positions des Britanniques ; les Belges, les Irlandais et les Luxembourgeois sont alignés sur les positions françaises ; Italiens et Allemands cherchent un compromis. Quant à la Commission, elle partage avec Londres l'idée de ne pas demander aux pays associables de choisir entre les trois options offertes par le Protocole 22 mais souhaite garder le principe de zone de libre-échange, et donc les préférences inverses.

À la suite de nombreuses discussions, les Neuf décident de proposer l'ouverture des négociations sur la base d'un « modèle unique » fondé sur la

[14] « These two issues are linked : an early choice will, in the French view, separate the sheep from the goats ; increase the chances of the sheep offering reciprocity ; but also divide the Protocol 22 countries into the two groups which we have sought from the start to avoid. » TNA, FCO 30/1696, Douglas-Home to Edward Heath, 20 juillet 1973.

[15] « We are not in a hurry'; 'We are not prepared to yield on these issues. We can afford to dig in since an unresolved argument will in effect be a victory for us. If there is no agreement, the Community will have to make a brief opening statement at the opening meeting without reference to the tariff regime or the choice of option. We must not agree a text, the effect of which would be to split associated and Associables immediately into two opposing camps. » TNA, FCO 30/1696, EEC Council of Ministers 23-24 July, Protocol 22 – background, 23 juillet 1973.

Convention de Yaoundé, en laissant ouvertes d'autres options. Quant au régime tarifaire, il est simplement mentionné qu'il devra être compatible avec les règles du GATT. La stratégie adoptée est ainsi celle souhaitée par les Britanniques : mettre en avant une proposition susceptible d'intéresser les pays associables, et notamment les plus réticents d'entre eux, de façon à renvoyer les choix difficiles à plus tard.

Les négociations

Malgré certaines incertitudes sur le nombre final de participants, la conférence inaugurale de Bruxelles, les 25 et 26 juillet 1973, se déroule sans obstacle majeur. Après la présentation des offres européennes par le Président danois du Conseil des Ministres de la CEE, c'est au tour des pays d'Afrique, des Caraïbes et du Pacifique d'intervenir. Ils demandent l'abolition des préférences réciproques, l'accès libre au Marché commun européen pour tous leurs produits, la révision des règles d'origine[16], la garantie de prix stables, équitables et rémunérateurs sur le marché de la Communauté pour les principaux produits exportés, la participation à la gestion du FED, l'adoption de mesures pour renforcer la coopération régionale, ainsi que des transferts gratuits de technologie. Au terme de son discours, le ministre du Commerce du Nigeria, W. Briggs, déclare au nom des pays africains :

> *Les États africains remettent en cause l'ordre commercial économique et monétaire international actuel, notamment la nature des relations entre les pays développés et les pays en voie de développement ; nous sommes d'avis que la structure actuelle des relations commerciales et financières internationales n'a pas été de nature à promouvoir notre développement économique. Nous pensons que le moment est venu pour l'Europe des Neuf d'adopter des mesures spéciales de nature à contribuer au progrès de nos pays*[17].

L'ambition qu'ont les pays du Commonwealth de réformer profondément les relations avec la CEE est ainsi clairement exprimée[18]. Mais l'élément le plus important de la conférence est que les États africains, malgré de nombreuses divergences, restent unis derrière leur porte-parole. Les pays des Caraïbes et du

[16] Les règles d'origine servent à identifier l'origine d'un produit. Les produits en provenance des pays associés entrant sans payer de tarifs douaniers, les règles d'origine limitent à un certain niveau le pourcentage de valeur ajoutée que ces produits peuvent recevoir dans d'autres pays. Les pays ACP avaient demandé que le taux que leurs industries pouvaient apporter pour bénéficier de l'entrée libre sur le Marché commun soit baissé de 50% à 25%. En revanche, la crainte des pays européens est de voir arriver sur le Marché commun des produits tiers (par exemple américains ou japonais) après une transformation nominale dans les pays ACP. Voir par exemple MAE, De-CE 1967-1974, 1102, Note, 10 janvier 1975.

[17] MAE, De-Ce 1969-1974, 1099, Briggs, Brussels Conference, 25-26 July 1973.

[18] Sur Lomé et le Nouvel ordre économique international, voir Frans. A. M. ALTING Von GEUSAU (dir.), *The Lomé Convention and a New International Economic Order*, Leyden: A.W. Sijthoff, 1977; E. C. ONWUKA, 'The Lomé Conventions and the Search for a New International Economic Order', *The Indian Journal of Economics*, n. 299, April 1995. Sur la CEE et le dialogue Nord-Sud dans les années 1970, voir Giuliano GARAVINI, *Dopo gli imperi. L'integrazione europea nello scontro Nord-Sud*, Firenze: Le Monnier, 2009.

Pacifique font de même, avec un représentant unique par groupe régional. L'unité des pays africains étonne autant les Français que les Britanniques : « Si l'on se souvient des profondes divisions qui semblaient si proches de la surface de 'l'Unité africaine', il semble presque incroyable que plus de trente pays d'Afrique anglophones et francophones soient parvenus non seulement à s'accorder sur un porte-parole unique mais à produire pour lui, tous ensemble, une déclaration si claire et si bien rédigée »[19]. Lors de la conclusion du colloque, les trois groupes régionaux décident de faire un pas supplémentaire sur la voie de l'unification en créant la coalition des pays ACP, avec un seul porte-parole[20]. Le groupe ACP sera institutionnalisé par l'accord de Georgetown signé en juin 1975 après la fin des négociations.

Les négociations, suspendues pendant l'été, reprennent en octobre. Elles s'articulent autour d'une série de questions relatives aux éléments qui fonderont la nouvelle convention. Il s'agit de points sur lesquels la Commission et les Neuf ont déjà commencé à réfléchir et qui sont en même temps au cœur des intérêts des pays ACP : la zone de libre-échange eurafricaine et les préférences réciproques, la création d'un système de stabilisation des revenus des exportations des pays ACP, le montant du FED et son financement.

Le régime des échanges commerciaux

La question des échanges commerciaux entre les pays ACP et la Communauté représente un des sujets les plus conflictuels des négociations. En fait, la zone de libre-échange eurafricaine, prévue par les deux Conventions de Yaoundé, repose sur les préférences directes (dont bénéficiaient les exportations des pays associés) et réciproques (appliquées aux exportations européennes). Cependant, les pays associés ont gardé leur liberté tarifaire par rapport aux pays tiers. Ils peuvent éliminer tous les tarifs à l'égard des pays tiers et mettre ainsi fin au caractère préférentiel des échanges avec la CEE (comme dans le cas du Congo Kinshasa et du Togo). Par ailleurs, en cas de besoin, les pays africains ont la possibilité d'introduire des restrictions dans leur commerce avec la CEE.

Pour les pays associés, les préférences inverses ne représentent pas un problème. Influencés par la France, ils considèrent ces préférences nécessaires pour être exonérés du paiement du tarif extérieur commun (TEC). Pour certains États, comme le Sénégal, les préférences inverses sont importantes parce que, grâce à

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[19] « If one recalls the deep divisions that seemed to lie so close to the surface of "African Unity", it really seems almost incredible that over thirty English and French speaking African countries managed not only to agree on a single spokesman but also to work out together such a clear and well-drafted statement for him to make », TNA, FCO 30/1696, UKREP Brussels to FCO, 'Opening conference : Protocol 22 etc. Countries on 25/26 July: comment', 28 juillet 1973.

[20] Sur les facteurs qui ont amené les pays associés et associables à s'unir, voir Jean-Marie PALAYRET, « Mondialisme contre régionalisme : CEE et ACP dans les négociations de la convention de Lomé, 1970-75 », in Antonio VARSORI (ed.), *Inside the European Community. Actors and policies in the European integration 1957-1974*, Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2006, p. 378.

elles, les États sont vraiment des « associés » et non des simples bénéficiaires de l'aide européenne[21]. Les pays du Commonwealth, par contre, sont profondément hostiles aux préférences inverses, considérées comme un résidu de l'époque coloniale. En tant qu'États en développement, ils estiment ne pas être tenus à accorder la réciprocité tarifaire. Par ailleurs, les pays des Caraïbes, pour lesquels les exportations aux États-Unis sont fondamentales, ne veulent approuver aucune mesure susceptible de perturber ces courants d'échange. Les pays du Commonwealth, plus motivés, imposent leur point de vue aux États associés qui, après une défense symbolique du principe des préférences inverses, acceptent que le groupe ACP subordonne la conclusion de la nouvelle convention à l'abolition des préférences inverses. Mais les demandes des ACP ne se limitent pas aux préférences inverses. Ils réclament un accès totalement libre au Marché commun pour leurs exportations (y compris agricoles), des règles d'origine plus souples de façon à faciliter leur développement, notamment industriel, et la reconnaissance du principe de l'origine cumulative pour favoriser la coopération régionale[22].

Parmi les Neuf, l'Allemagne, les Pays-Bas et la Grande-Bretagne sont favorables à l'abolition des préférences inverses[23]. Londres, tout particulièrement, considère qu'elles auraient empêché l'adhésion des pays du Commonwealth et représentent un motif de friction entre la CEE et les États-Unis. Par ailleurs, étant donné que Washington s'est dit prêt à accepter les « préférences spéciales », c'est-à-dire les préférences accordées par les pays développés aux pays en développement, Londres fait observer que l'argument selon lequel la convention doit être basée sur la zone de libre-échange pour être conforme au GATT perd de sa force : « Si nous pouvons parvenir à convaincre la Communauté d'abandonner les préférences réciproques, nous augmenterons la probabilité qu'un nombre important de pays du Commonwealth associables participe à la nouvelle convention et cela devrait également nous être d'une grande aide pour mettre fin à un point de friction dans les relations CEE/USA, dont l'influence est actuellement bien supérieur à son importance réelle » [24].

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[21] « M. Senghor a parlé ensuite de la Convention actuelle pour dire que ce système lui paraissait tout à fait juste dans son fondement. Il était naturel que l'Europe et l'Afrique, qui ont un fonds commun de civilisation, soient associées. […] En tout état de cause [a poursuivi Senghor] la réciprocité est son fondement essentiel, et devra être maintenue, non seulement pour des raisons commerciales et juridiques, mais pour des considérations de dignité humaine, car les Africains ne veulent pas se présenter en 'mendiants' », MAE, De-Ce, 1099, télégramme 1050-1060, Bruxelles, 28 mars 1973.

[22] TNA, FCO 30/2119, Summary of Conclusions of the Third session of the Council of Ministers of the African Group for negotiations with the EEC, Dakar, 6 juin 1974.

[23] TNA, FCO 30/1689, J. A. Robinson (FCO), 13 février 1973.

[24] « If we can get the Community to abandon trade reciprocity, we shall increase the likelihood that a substantial proportion of the Commonwealth Associables will participate in the new convention and go far to remove an irritant in the EEC/USA relations which has at present an effect well in excess of its intrinsic importance. » TNA, FCO 30/1709, FCO Memorandum, 29 mai 1973. « In a recent discussion, United States representatives have indicated that they would not in principle object to arrangements under which the Community gave preferential treatment to the Yaoundé countries and the Associable Commonwealth. What they are still strongly opposed to is the granting by those countries of reverse preferences, or "free trade reciprocity" to the Community. A decision by the Community to continue to seek trade reciprocity could thus be a negative factor of some significance in

Pour la France en revanche, ces préférences sont importantes parce qu'elles lui garantissent des avantages économiques[25], font partie de l'acquis communautaire et servent à garantir l'association eurafricaine au GATT. Sans les préférences inverses, l'association ne pourra pas être présentée comme une zone de libre-échange. Par conséquent, les préférences accordées aux pays associés risqueraient d'être confondues avec les préférences généralisées. Ces dernières, autorisées par la deuxième conférence de la Conférence des Nations Unies sur le Commerce et le Développement (CNUCED), tenue à New Delhi en 1968, avaient été introduites par la CEE en 1971 en faveur des pays du Tiers monde. Les préférences généralisées, toutefois, étaient moins généreuses que les préférences inverses, n'étant pas négociées mais simplement accordées par la Communauté en faveur d'un certain nombre de pays. Du point de vue politique, elles étaient donc beaucoup moins significatives. La Commission a une position proche de celle de la France. Elle est favorable au principe de zone de libre-échange, même si ce principe devrait être appliqué avec beaucoup de souplesse[26]. Cependant, une fois qu'elle prend conscience que l'opposition des ACP aux préférences inverses risque de mettre en péril le bon déroulement des négociations, la Commission abandonne graduellement ses positions.

Les Neuf et les pays ACP arrivent finalement à un compromis en juillet 1974 : les préférences inverses seront abolies. En revanche, les préférences accordées par les Neuf aux produits exportés par les pays ACP restent en vigueur[27]. La Communauté reconnaît le droit de libre accès à l'essentiel – et non à la totalité – des exportations des pays ACP (cette définition couvrant 98% des exportations des pays ACP vers la CEE). Les États ACP et les Neuf s'accordent le bénéfice de la clause de la nation la plus favorisée, mais les États ACP peuvent déroger à cette clause en faveur d'autres États en voie de développement[28]. Les règles d'origine ne sont pas assouplies, mais le principe de l'origine cumulative est admis, c'est-à-dire qu'un produit travaillé dans plusieurs pays ACP entrera librement sur le Marché commun.

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setting the atmosphere for the multilateral trade negotiations and could somewhat lessen the chance of a satisfactory Trade Bill getting through Congress. The other point of interest which US representatives have made is that, if the Community sought a GATT waiver to legitimize one way preferential arrangements (under which the Community gave preferences to the Yaoundé countries but sought nothing in return) they would support such a request. They also said that they would expect the Latin Americans to support such a waiver. (This would largely dispose of the French argument that reciprocity is required in order to conform with GATT Art. XXIV). » TNA, FCO 30/1709, 'Trade aspects. Direct trade interest', n. d. , c. mars 1973.

[25] La France est le principal exportateur dans les pays associés. En 1966, 67% des produits en provenance de la CEE dans les pays associés sont d'origine française. Les parts allemande, néerlandaise, belge et italienne représentent respectivement 10%, 4,9%, 11,1% et 7%. MAE, De-Ce, 803, Bilan de la Convention de Yaoundé, Janvier 1968, Note n. 1. Voir aussi Frédéric TURPIN, « L'association Europe-Afrique : une 'bonne affaire' pour la France dans ses relations avec l'Afrique (1957-1975) » in BOSSUAT & BITSCH, *op. cit.*, pp. 345-360.

[26] TNA, FCO 30/1690, UKREP, Brussels, 'Reverse Preferences', 14 février 1973.

[27] Les préférences accordées par les Neuf aux pays ACP se justifient parce que ces derniers sont des États en développement, et ont donc droit à des conditions spéciales : ce principe avait été introduit par la CNUCED en 1968.

[28] MAE, De-Ce, 1101, Note du SGCI, 18 juillet 1974.

Le système de stabilisation des exportations

Dans le mémorandum présenté au Conseil en avril 1973 sur la nouvelle Convention, la Commission propose la création d'un système de stabilisation des exportations. Celui-ci avait été conçu, au moins en partie, pour compenser les pays associés pour les pertes subies par la baisse du tarif extérieur commun (TEC). En effet, depuis le Kennedy round, le TEC sur les principaux produits exportés par les pays associés avait constamment baissé, diminuant ainsi la marge de préférence dont ces pays bénéficiaient par rapport aux pays tiers. La France, qui, dans la zone franc, avait financé des systèmes comparables, soutient avec force l'idée de la Commission[29]. La Grande-Bretagne, tout en étant soucieuse de ne pas trop discriminer entre pays associés et pays tiers, est disposée à prendre en considération cette proposition, compte tenu des bénéfices que les pays associables du Commonwealth auraient pu en tirer. Par ailleurs, étant donné que le gouvernement britannique veut assurer au sucre des pays des Caraïbes un régime spécial accordé par la Communauté, Londres ne peut pas, de principe, s'opposer au soutien aux matières premières[30].

En revanche, la première réaction de l'Allemagne et des Pays-Bas à la proposition de la Commission de créer un système de garantie pour les exportations des pays associés est négative[31]. Tous deux considèrent que ce système risque de coûter trop cher et représente une discrimination trop forte en faveur des pays associés. Un tel système, s'il devait être appliqué, devrait être négocié au plan mondial et non régional. Grâce au travail de la Commission, qui considère cette mesure comme un élément phare de la nouvelle convention, les Neuf finissent par approuver le principe. Reste alors à trouver un accord sur les modalités de fonctionnement du système de garantie. Trois projets sont présentés. Premièrement, la Commission, soutenue par la France, propose un système basé sur un mécanisme automatique de compensation des pertes dues à l'instabilité des prix. Le système doit reposer sur une formule mathématique de façon à éviter que les pays ACP ne contestent un pouvoir discrétionnaire de la CEE[32]. Deuxièmement, l'Italie est en faveur d'un système fondé sur le principe d'une obligation réciproque : la CEE s'engagera à acheter à un prix fixe une certaine quantité de produits que les pays ACP s'engagent à lui réserver. Enfin, l'Allemagne et les Pays-Bas veulent un système moins ambitieux, qui offrirait un simple complément à l'aide financière. Bonn, craignant les coûts du système, insiste fermement sur la nécessité de fixer un plafond maximum d'intervention et de prévoir une garantie, à déterminer au cas par

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[29] Hubert GERARDIN, *La Zone Franc,* Paris : L'Harmattan, 1989 ; Benoît CLAVERANNE, *La zone franc : au-delà de la monnaie*, Paris : Economica, 2005.

[30] TNA, FCO 30/1709, FCO Memorandum, 29 mars 1973.

[31] « […] les Allemands (surtout semble-t-il en raison des réticences de leur ministère des Finances) et les Italiens (toujours à court d'instructions dès lors qu'il s'agit d'aide financière) ont joué, dans ce débat, le rôle de freins. Il n'a donc pas été possible de venir à bout de l'obstination néerlandaise contre cette forme d'aide. » MAE, De-Ce, 1099, télégramme, Bruxelles, 19 octobre 1973.

[32] MAE, De-Ce, 1100, Note, 1er février 1974.

cas. Les ressources ainsi fournies devront être utilisées dans le cadre des plans nationaux de développement et non en faveur des producteurs[33].

Les pays ACP ont une vision différente, beaucoup plus ambitieuse, du système de stabilisation. Ce dernier doit agir pour augmenter les revenus provenant des exportations, garantir les prix, protéger les producteurs contre les fluctuations du marché et mettre fin à l'érosion des termes d'échange[34]. Les prix seront négociés produit par produit et revus périodiquement en fonction de l'évolution du marché, des coûts de production et de transport. Les aides devront être accordées quand les prix descendront au-dessous d'un seuil décidé en commun. Le système sera géré de façon paritaire par la CEE et les États ACP.

Dans sa forme finale, le Système de stabilisation des exportations (STABEX) est un compromis entre les projets de la Commission et de l'Allemagne[35]. Le remboursement est fixé sur la base d'une formule mathématique prévue dans un acte communautaire. Avant d'autoriser un transfert de fonds, la Commission doit s'assurer de l'accord du Conseil. En cas de désaccord, la question sera résolue dans le cadre des procédures communautaires. Les pays bénéficiaires sont tenus de rembourser les aides en cas d'augmentation des prix. Les pays ACP, cependant, obtiennent gain de cause sur certaines questions qui ne sont pas sans importance : le fer est inclus dans la liste des produits couverts par le STABEX alors que les Neuf voulaient se limiter aux produits agricoles. Les États les plus pauvres sont exonérés de l'obligation de rembourser le STABEX. Il est par ailleurs décidé, comme le demandent les pays ACP, de préciser dans la Convention la division des fonds entre le FED, le STABEX et les aides destinées aux territoires d'outremer des Neuf.

Le Fonds européen de développement (FED)

Dans son mémorandum sur la nouvelle convention, la Commission propose de budgétiser le FED, c'est-à-dire de le financer sur les ressources propres de la CEE. Si l'Italie était opposée parce qu'elle aurait dû contribuer de façon plus importante, cette solution pouvait intéresser l'Allemagne, qui n'aurait pas à contribuer directement au financement. D'autre part, la France pouvait également être favorable – ou au moins non hostile – parce que la budgétisation du FED garantirait des ressources stables à la politique de coopération et soutiendrait donc sa pérennité[36]. Londres, de son coté, était très favorable parce que sa contribution serait inférieure par rapport à un fonds financé directement par les pays membres[37].

[33] *Ibid.*
[34] MAE, De-Ce, 1100, Télégramme Addis Abeba, 22 février 1974.
[35] *Agence Europe*, Bulletin n. 1572, 1er août 1974. Sur le compromis, voir J-M. PALAYRET, *op. cit.*, pp. 387-388.
[36] « Cette idée [la budgétisation du FED], révolutionnaire, peut paraître séduisante si elle doit traduire la pérennité de la politique d'association dans le cadre le plus communautaire qui soit, celui du budget ; en revanche elle risque d'atténuer l'aspect contractuel de l'association et de créer une incitation, dont on ne peut dire aujourd'hui quelle sera la limite, à développer l'aide financière de la Communauté à l'ensemble des pays en voie de développement. » MAE, De-Ce, 1099, Note, 25 avril 1973.
[37] TNA, FCO 30/2140, European Integration Department, 'Financing of the EDF: problem', 1 novembre 1974.

Malgré ces bonnes perspectives, la proposition n'est pas approuvée, trop compliquée à réaliser dans un moment de redéfinition de l'unité monétaire européenne[38]. Par ailleurs, les Neuf hésitent beaucoup à mettre entièrement la gestion du FED entre les mains de la Commission.

Une fois ce projet abandonné, les débats se tournent vers le montant total du Fonds. La France s'oriente vers une contribution de 500 millions de dollars[39] pour tenir compte de l'augmentation des pays bénéficiaires. La question est alors de savoir si l'Allemagne fédérale et la Grande-Bretagne sont disposées à un effort comparable à une époque où le contexte économique national et international est assez fragile. De plus, le gouvernement britannique est tiraillé par deux exigences partiellement contradictoires. D'une part, il veut assurer aux pays associables des bénéfices équivalents à ceux des pays associés. Etant donné que la CEE a garanti aux pays associés qu'ils ne seront pas pénalisés par l'adhésion à la Convention des pays du Commonwealth, cela implique un FED doté de ressources consistantes. D'autre part, Londres veut faire instituer un Fonds pour les pays en développement non associés (et membres du Commonwealth), ce qui aurait demandé un effort ultérieur aux Neuf[40].

Les pays ACP, de leur côté, demandent à ce que leur rôle dans la gestion du FED soit valorisé. À cette fin, les projets financés par le FED devraient faire partie de leurs plans nationaux de développement. Ils demandent à contribuer au FED et à le gérer paritairement avec la Communauté. En ce qui concerne le montant total des aides, l'inflation doit être prise en compte et les dons sont censés représenter les 9/10èmes du total. Le reste est à attribuer sous forme de prêt à un taux d'intérêt très bas (0,5 % au maximum), avec des délais de remboursement très longs (50 ans)[41].

Dans sa réponse aux pays ACP, la Communauté fait remarquer que certaines de leurs demandes sont déjà prévues par la Convention de Yaoundé. Yaoundé réservait aux pays associés le droit de présenter les demandes de financement, l'action du FED devait s'insérer dans les plans nationaux de développement et les sociétés des États associés bénéficiaient de conditions particulières pour l'attribution des contrats d'exécution. Par ailleurs, la Commission accepte que la gestion des aides soit la plus décentralisée possible[42]. En revanche il n'est pas question d'impliquer les pays ACP dans le processus de décision. En ce qui concerne le montant du FED, à la conférence de Kingston en juillet 1974, le président du Conseil des ministres déclare que la Communauté a l'intention de tripler son aide,

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[38] MAE, De-Ce, 1102, Note, 10 janvier 1975.
[39] Elle était de 300 millions dans la Convention précédente.
[40] « We want an EDF large enough to ensure that the future Commonwealth associates get treated at least as generously as the French clients […] ; Our own contribution to the fund must not be so large as to distort our aid policies and divert British and Community aid funds away from non-associates; any arrangement for financing the fund must have no adverse implications for our other policies, particularly for our renegotiation objectives as regards the Community budget as a whole. » TNA, FCO 30/2140, Braithwaite (EID) to Butler (Private Secretary), 'Financing of the EDF', 1 novembre 1974.
[41] MAE, De-Ce, 1099, Note, 9 novembre 1973.
[42] *Ibid.*

c'est-à-dire qu'elle entend accorder un aide d'environ 3 milliards de dollars, un chiffre assez loin des 8 milliards que les ACP avaient demandé.

En réalité, même le simple partage des contributions entre les Neuf demande encore trois mois de négociations périlleuses. Les difficultés proviennent essentiellement de la Grande-Bretagne, qui se refuse à contribuer au même niveau que la France et l'Allemagne et insiste pour introduire une répartition basée sur le produit national brut, qui lui est plus favorable[43]. C'est seulement en janvier 1975 qu'un compromis est trouvé : les fonds communautaires destinés à financer le FED, le STABEX et les aides aux territoires d'outremer s'élèveront à 3150 millions de dollars. La contribution de Paris et Bonn constituera 25,9 % du total, tandis que la Grande-Bretagne financera 18,7 %, plus que si la somme était calculée sur la base du PNB mais moins que les montants français et allemands. Les pays ACP, tout en considérant ce chiffre insuffisant, refusent de débattre le montant.

Les négociations se terminent officiellement le 28 février 1975 avec la signature à Lomé de la nouvelle Convention. Jusqu'au dernier moment, l'incertitude demeure parce que les pays des Caraïbes menacent de bloquer les négociations s'ils n'obtiennent pas satisfaction sur le sucre. La question du sucre, même si elle reste aux marges des négociations de Lomé, est très importante. Lors des négociations pour son adhésion, Londres avait obtenu que la CEE accorde une attention particulaire au sucre importé des Caraïbes et reprenne à son compte les termes du *Commonwealth Sugar Act* par lequel la Grande Bretagne s'engageait à importer une certaine quantité de sucre à un prix garanti. Grâce aux efforts conjugués des Britanniques et des pays ACP, les négociations sur le sucre se terminent de façon très positive pour les pays des Caraïbes. Un protocole sur le sucre est ainsi attaché à la Convention de Lomé : la CEE s'engage à importer dans les cinq ans suivant 1.250.000 tonnes de sucre en provenance des pays ACP. Le sucre bénéficiera de garanties de prix et d'achat. En pratique, pour la première fois, les principes à la base de la politique agricole commune sont appliqués à un produit qui n'est pas d'origine communautaire.

Conclusion

Quelles conclusions tirer de l'action britannique lors des négociations pour la Convention de Lomé[44] et de ses relations avec les pays ACP, en particulier avec les pays africains ?

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[43] TNA, FCO 30/2140, Braithwaite (EID) to Butler (Private Secretary), 'Financing of the EDF', 1 novembre 1974.

[44] Sur Lomé entre autres, voir Marjorie LISTER, *The European Community and the Developing World: the Role of the Lomé Convention*, Avebury: Aldershot, 1988; John RAVENHILL, *Collective clientelism. The Lomé Conventions and North-South relations*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1985; William BROWN, *The European Union and Africa. The Restructuring of North-South relations*, London: I.B. Tauris, 2002; Lili REYELS, *Die Entstehung des ersten Vertrags von Loméimdeutsch-französischen Spannungsfeld 1973-1975,* Baden-Baden: NomosVerlag, 2008.

Si on analyse la Convention à la lumière des objectifs que Londres s'était fixés, c'est un succès : tous les pays ACP en sont membres, les pays du Commonwealth ne sont pas des partenaires de deuxième classe par rapport aux pays déjà associés et ont même joué un rôle fondamental lors des négociations. La Convention répond à plusieurs demandes qu'ils avaient formulées. Elle prévoit même un chapitre sur la coopération industrielle, considérée par les Nigérians comme un des éléments fondamentaux de la nouvelle Convention[45]. Dans une note interne du Foreign Office qui fait le bilan des négociations, un fonctionnaire écrit :

> *Nous sommes entrés dans les négociations […] avec cinq objectifs: 1) obtenir un accord favorable pour les pays du Commonwealth qui sont éligibles; 2) encourager le plus grand nombre d'entre eux à participer; 3) réduire ou éliminer les aspects contestables des Conventions de Yaoundé antérieures; 4) obtenir pour 1,4 millions de tonnes de sucre d'origine Commonwealth un accès au marché européen; 5) n'entreprendre aucune nouvelle obligation lourde, et en particulier, limiter le coût du FED. […] Je crois qu'il est juste de dire que ces cinq objectifs ont été négociés avec succès ; et que nous avons franchi un autre pas important pour détacher la Communauté de son passé introspectif et centré sur la France »*[46].

De ce point de vue, la politique de coopération de la CEE, fortement rénovée par la Convention de Lomé, est devenue un élément très positif dans les rapports entre l'Europe communautaire et les pays ACP. Ces derniers n'hésitent pas, après la signature de la Convention, à défendre ce modèle spécial de relations avec la CEE, alors qu'ils l'avaient souvent très critiqué au cours de la décennie précédente.

En revanche, Londres n'a pas obtenu grande chose sur la question de l'équilibre entre pays associés et non-associés. La Communauté a approuvé un Fonds d'urgence pour les pays les plus durement frappés par la crise énergétique mais il n'existe pas encore de véritable politique de coopération communautaire à l'égard du Tiers Monde. Si le principe d'un Fonds en faveur des pays non associés a été approuvé par les Neuf en juillet 1974, sa mise en route reste très difficile étant donné les difficultés économiques des pays membres de la CEE et les efforts déjà

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[45] Selon l'ambassadeur nigérian, les éléments les plus importants de la nouvelle Convention étaient le nouveau régime commercial et la coopération industrielle « qui nous donne l'espoir d'obtenir une aide à la formation, et aux transferts de technologies à ce moment crucial de notre développement » (« which give us the hope of assistance in training, in transferring technology during this very crucial time in our development »), *The Courrier*, n° 31, special issue, mars 1975, p. 9.

[46] « We started the negotiations […] with five objectives: 1) to get a good deal for the eligible Commonwealth countries; 2) to encourage as many of them as possible to participate; 3) to reduce or eliminate the objectionable features of the earlier Yaoundé Conventions; 4) to get access to Europe for 1,4 million ton of Commonwealth Sugar ; 5) to undertake no burdensome new obligations, and in particular to limit the cost to of the EDF. […] I think that we can fairly claim to have succeeded in all our five main aims; and to have taken another major step towards turning the Community away from its introspective and franco-centric past. » TNA, FCO 30/2631, Personal Note of R.Q. Braithwaite (EID) on 'The End of Protocol 22', 3 février 1975.

consentis pour la nouvelle Convention[47]. Il sera institué seulement en 1976 et disposera d'environ 25 millions de dollars[48] – presque rien par rapport aux 3 milliards pour les pays ACP. En réalité, le Tiers Monde, à la suite de Lomé, subit une plus grande discrimination que par le passé, tandis que les relations entre l'Europe communautaire et l'Afrique sub-saharienne sont encore plus étroites. La Convention de Lomé établit une coopération privilégiée dans le domaine des échanges commerciaux, renforce la coopération technique et financière et investit des domaines nouveaux comme le secteur de la promotion industrielle et de la stabilisation des exportations. Au sucre des Caraïbes, la CEE donne même des garanties comparables à celles dont profitent les producteurs communautaires. Rien de comparable n'existe pour le reste du Tiers Monde. Les pays en développement, s'ils ne bénéficient pas du système de préférences généralisées qui cependant est accordé de façon unilatérale, doivent payer le Tarif extérieur commun de la CEE. De véritables accords de coopération technique et financière (et non simplement des accords commerciaux) avec les pays d'Amérique latine ou d'Asie ne seront signés que dans les années 1980. Même la coopération avec les pays de la rive sud de la Méditerranée, qui touche plusieurs domaines et mobilise des ressources financières importantes, n'a pas la même importance qu'avec les pays ACP.

Désormais presque toute l'Afrique (avec quelques importantes exceptions[49]) est liée par des accords préférentiels à la CEE. C'est un facteur important pour les équilibres de la Guerre froide, à une période où les États-Unis connaissent de très sérieuses difficultés internes avec le scandale du Watergate, mais aussi des échecs sur le plan international avec la prise de Saigon par les Vietminh, et l'arrivée au pouvoir en Angola et Mozambique de partis politiques liés à l'Union soviétique[50]. En fait, un des résultats les plus importants de l'adhésion britannique au Marché commun est le renforcement des rapports de l'organisation européenne avec les pays ACP, et tout spécialement avec l'Afrique sub-saharienne. Après les difficultés des années soixante, tant sur le plan européen qu'avec les pays du Commonwealth, le bon déroulement des négociations de Lomé permet ainsi à Londres d'asseoir son influence dans la structure communautaire et de se situer, avec d'autres pays membres, au centre du dialogue entre la CEE et les pays en développement.

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[47] « Financial aid to non-associates is more difficult. The Community decided in principle to give such aid in July 1974. But it will not be easy to persuade our partners to commit actual funds. The Germans in particular argue that they already spend more on aid than we do, that they are paying a larger share of the EDF (which benefits Commonwealth countries) than we are, that they prefer bilateral to multilateral aid, and that in any case thy have no spare money. It will be hard to shift them. » TNA, FCO 30/2632, Braithwaite (EID) to Marshall, 11 février 1975.

[48] Archives historiques de la Commission européenne, *Dixième rapport général sur l'activité des Communautés européennes (1976)*, Bruxelles.

[49] Les exceptions les plus importantes de l'époque étaient, outre l'Afrique du Sud et la Rhodésie, l'Angola et le Mozambique, qui venaient à peine d'accéder à l'indépendance.

[50] Odd Arne WESTAD, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

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The United Kingdom and the Independence of Portuguese Africa (1974-1976): Stakes, Perceptions and Policy Options

Pedro Aires OLIVEIRA
Instituto de História Contemporânea
Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas, Universidade Nova de Lisboa

Although some research into the nature of the United Kingdom's involvement in the final years of Portuguese rule in Africa has been recently carried out, the British role in the hazardous transition to independence in some of the Portuguese colonies immediately after the Carnation revolution of 1974 has until now received little or no attention, at least as far as historical literature in English is concerned[1]. This article seeks to fill that gap. It will start by sorting out the reasons behind the United Kingdom's policy of even-handedness with regard to the conflicts in Lusophone Africa up to 1974, which is essential to understand some of the limitations which the Labour government had to face in the period following the collapse of Portugal's colonial regime. After a brief description of London's expectations regarding the different 'roadmaps' for a transfer of power in Portuguese Africa, the article will focus on the two cases which possessed the greatest relevance to British interests: Mozambique and Angola. There was an interesting contrast in the way British diplomats and decision-makers assessed the implications of a 'Marxist' triumph in Maputo and in Luanda. Thus, while the FCO made a positive evaluation of FRELIMO's ascendancy in Mozambique, taking quick steps to establish friendly relations with Samora Machel's movement, it displayed a much cooler attitude vis-à-vis the MPLA[2] (a party which, since the 1960s, had kept a few links with the Labour party and allied organizations), and made significant overtures towards one of its main rivals, UNITA,[3] led by Jonas Savimbi, who by 1974 had acquired a somewhat dubious reputation among sectors of the European Left.[4] Drawing on recently released sources, this article will try to make sense of this dichotomy in the light of the analysis produced by British officials concerning: i) the leadership abilities of the main groups vying for power in Angola and Mozambique; ii) the implications of the situation in the two territories for the evolution of other Southern African conflicts (particularly the Rhodesian

[1] Notable exceptions are Glyn STONE's articles, 'Britain and the Angolan Revolt of 1961', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol. 27, nº 1, 1999, and 'Britain and Portuguese Africa, 1961-65', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol. 28, nº 3, 2000.
[2] Movimento para a Libertação de Angola.
[3] União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola.
[4] On Savimbi's reputation among the British left, see Michael WOLFERS & Jane BERGEROL, *Angola in the Frontline*, London: Zed Press, 1983.

one); iii) the strategic consequences that would result from the almost inevitable extension of the Communist powers' influence in the region.

The final years of the Estado Novo and the first steps of Portugal's decolonization

During the colonial wars fought by Portugal in Africa (1961-74), the United Kingdom pursued a policy of non-commitment vis-à-vis the authoritarian governments of Salazar/Caetano, hoping to strike a balance between its loyalties as a NATO ally and the need to distance itself from a regime that attracted a considerable amount of international criticism, not least from the majority of the member states of the Commonwealth.[5]

Overall, this policy was pursued by the two dominant parties in the United Kingdom. Although Labour had been extremely critical of what its leaders perceived as a misjudged tolerance of the Tories regarding the hard-line policies followed by Salazar in Angola and other territories, Harold Wilson's governments barely distinguished themselves from their Conservative predecessors in their dealings with the Portuguese authorities of the 1960s. The reason for this attitude was twofold. In the late 1960s, Portugal's colonial predicament in Africa seemed less dramatic than in previous years, at least in purely military terms, therefore diminishing the likelihood of a successful pro-disengagement démarche in Lisbon. Facing a war on three fronts in its 'overseas provinces', the Portuguese armed forces were stretched to their limits but the vulnerabilities of their adversaries were considerable, and in places like Angola—the 'Crown Jewel' of the Portuguese empire—the rivalries among the nationalist parties were such that by the early 1970s, only a tiny proportion of the territory could be said to be under the control of one of the guerrilla movements. The situation was less promising in the two other theatres, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique, where the PAIGC[6] and FRELIMO[7] had made important inroads into previously secured areas, usually accompanied by significant propaganda coups at the UN or in the Western media.[8] That said, very few contemporary observers—including Britain's diplomatic representatives in Lisbon, Luanda and Lourenço Marques (there was no British consulate in Bissau)—felt confident to predict either the willingness of the Portuguese to reach a negotiated settlement or, alternatively, an imminent collapse of Caetano's regime.

The other motive for Britain's temporizing stance is explained by the nature of its ties with Portugal. The old Anglo-Portuguese alliance, stretching back to the fourteenth century, was by now essentially a symbolic arrangement, having been deprived of much of its former strategic significance. Portugal's security needs since

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[5] For a general assessment of Anglo-Portuguese relations in this period, see Pedro Aires OLIVEIRA, *Os Despojos da Aliança. A Grã-Bretanha e a Questão Colonial Portuguesa 1945-1975*, Lisboa: Tinta da China, 2007.

[6] Partido Africano da Independência de Cabo Verde e Guiné.

[7] Frente de Libertação de Moçambique.

[8] A useful (if somewhat flattering to the Portuguese armed forces) introduction to the Portuguese war effort in Africa is provided by John P. CANN, *Counterinsurgency in Africa: The Portuguese Way of War, 1961-1974*, Westport Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1997.

the inception of the Cold War were fulfilled by the United States through NATO, while its economic ties with other European countries had begun to take on much greater weight since the early 1960s. Still, Portugal's NATO membership as well as the strategic relevance of its Atlantic islands was a factor that few politicians in Whitehall chose to neglect given Britain's firm commitment to the Atlantic Alliance. There was another element that added to the delicacy of Britain's position towards Portugal's colonial idiosyncrasies: the situation in Rhodesia, where Britain's efforts to isolate Ian Smith's regime through the imposition of political, military and economic sanctions were largely frustrated by Portuguese and South African willingness to facilitate the supply of oil and other products to the rebel colony. In 1966, an incident with a Greek oil tanker near Beira had resulted in a diplomatic confrontation between London and Lisbon and the setting up of the Royal Navy's *Beira Patrol* to prevent further use of the Beira-Umtali pipeline.[9] The Royal Navy's mission was satisfactorily performed but oil kept reaching Rhodesia through alternative routes from Mozambican and South African ports. This meant that only by forcing these two countries to comply with the sanctions imposed on Salisbury could London hope to cut Smith off from external markets. Alas, this proved to be a step too far for successive British governments, which refrained from confronting the interests of the major multinational oil companies and were unwilling to alienate South Africa, their foremost trading partner in Africa. Holding the key to one of Salisbury's main transport routes, the Lourenço Marques-Malvernia railway line, Portugal would be a natural target for further sanctions that could tighten the pressure on Smith's regime, but this would probably lead to demands that South Africa be subject to the same penalty—a highly undesirable outcome for influential economic interests in the West.[10]

One of the consequences of the accommodating stance adopted by London was the great scarcity of contacts between British official circles and the liberation movements of Portuguese Africa, whether Marxist inspired or not. British diplomats in African countries where some of those movements held their headquarters were barred from entertaining relations with their leaders, even though this policy seemed to have been somehow relaxed in the early 1970s. That said, it is important to keep in mind the importance of certain non-official contacts established between the liberation movements and certain sectors of the British Left. The United Kingdom's relatively liberal policy regarding the issuing of visas to African nationalists had enabled figures like Amílcar Cabral, Agostinho Neto and Marcelino dos Santos to visit the British Isles and address meetings organized by anti-colonial groups. In 1968, a Committee for the Freedom of Mozambique, Angola and Guinea (CFMAG), was formed in London at the request of FRELIMO. It was led by the energetic radical lawyer and member of the House of Lords, Anthony Gifford, and had as its first major initiative the campaign against the Cabora Bassa hydroelectric scheme in Mozambique, and, in particular, the indirect participation of British firms and banks in various aspects of the project. Apart from acting as the formal representative of the liberation movements in the United Kingdom, the Committee promoted the visits

[9] Richard MOBLEY, 'The Beira Patrol. Britain's broken blockade against Rhodesia', *Naval War College Review*, vol. 4, nº 1, 2002, pp. 63-84.

[10] On the UK authorities' highly ambivalent attitude towards the oil sanctions imposed on Rhodesia, see Martin BAILEY, *Oilgate: the Sanctions Scandal*, Sevenoaks: Coronet, 1979.

of journalists and other individuals to the 'liberated areas' by the guerrillas, secured the distribution of informative material and propaganda and established links with parties, churches and similar organizations, such as the Anti-Apartheid Movement. Prominent figures from the Labour Left, from Judith Hart to Joan Lester and David Ennals, took part in activities promoted by Gifford's Committee and were familiar with some of the leading figures from the liberation movements affiliated with CFMAG.

All things considered, it is probably fair to say that when the authoritarian regime in Lisbon was finally overthrown by a military coup on 25 April 1974, Whitehall was relatively ill-informed regarding the ideology, organization, leadership and external supporters of the parties which seemed poised to become the major players in the transition to independence in Portuguese Africa, even if this lack of reliable intelligence was somehow compensated by the repertoire of contacts forged by one of Britain's governmental parties.

The near simultaneity of the regime change in Lisbon and the reinstatement of a Labour government in Whitehall, following Wilson's somewhat unexpected victory in the general election of February 1974, was therefore the major factor that enabled the United Kingdom to play a more relevant role than might have been expected in the dissolution of Portugal's imperial ties.[11] In its previous sojourn in opposition, the Labour Party had adopted a more militant posture regarding the continuation of the Estado Novo regime and its colonial policy, particularly in 1973. The revelation of the 'Wiriyamu' atrocities—a massacre of unarmed civilians in the province of Tete, Mozambique, perpetrated by Portuguese Special Forces—in the front page of *The Times*, and the coincidental timing of the subsequent public outrage and Caetano's official visit to London in July 1973, to celebrate the 600th anniversary of the Anglo-Portuguese alliance, gave Harold Wilson an opportunity to distance himself from Edward Heath's more accommodating stance. In a televised debate, the opposition leader stated that if returned to power, he would forward a motion for Portugal to be excluded from NATO and would take steps to strengthen his party's support for the independence movements in the Portuguese colonies.[12]

Labour's ties with the leader of the Portuguese Socialist Party in exile, Mário Soares, were also strengthened on that occasion, and a delegation from FRELIMO was invited to attend the Party's annual conference in September in Blackpool. In the run-up to the general election, various party documents and manifestos took care to address some of the suggestions put forward by its 'anti-imperialist' wing, namely the need to undertake a stronger commitment towards the liberation of Southern Africa from the grip of the white minority regimes.

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[11] On Portugal's metropolitan revolution and decolonization see Kenneth MAXWELL, The *Making of Portuguese Democracy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, and Norrie MACQUEEN, *The Decolonization of Portuguese Africa. Metropolitan Revolution and the Dissolution of Empire*, London: Longman, 1997.

[12] See Norrie MACQUEEN & Pedro Aires OLIVEIRA, 'Grocer Meets Butcher. Marcello Caetano's London visit of 1973 and the last days of Portugal's Estado Novo', *Cold War History*, vol. 10, nº 1, 2010. On the massacre's background and impact, see Adrian HASTINGS, *Wiriyamu*, London: Search Press, 1974.

Hence, the advent of a more liberal, if still undefined, regime in Lisbon, under the aegis of a military junta headed by General António de Spínola, opened good perspectives for close cooperation between the two countries in the colonial sphere. Soares and the Socialists became key protagonists in post-coup politics in Portugal and the British authorities were able to forge a wide range of contacts across the political spectrum in Lisbon. The Portuguese officials and military held British decolonization record in high esteem and were eager to learn from what they perceived as the British experience of ending an empire in a relatively orderly fashion, as well as from their ability to build strong links with former colonies through the Commonwealth.

For the British, as well as for Soares, who in this respect articulated the consensus of the 'moderate' parties set up after the Revolution, the restoration of the democratic freedoms in Portugal, and a relatively smooth transfer of power in Africa, depended upon the new regime's ability to put an end to the wars—even if this meant sacrificing some 'liberal niceties' in the agreements to be negotiated with the liberation movements. Any delay affecting the transition of power was generally seen as likely to bring about a breakdown of order, a renewal of the confrontation between the Portuguese army and the guerrillas, or even desperate counter-coups by the white settlers. All efforts were therefore to be directed at avoiding the destabilization of the political process in Portugal due to events in Africa—this was the paramount goal of the civilian actors in Portugal, as well as of the more 'progressive' wing of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and its key political officer, Major Melo Antunes. The 'romantic' stand taken by the non-elected President of the Republic, António de Spínola, who in the early stages of his short mandate tried to impose a plebiscitary alternative to the direct transfer of power to the liberation movements, was therefore perceived as unrealistic both in Whitehall and in the mainstream British press.[13]

In the months following the coup, the British authorities essentially tried to assist Portugal in its efforts to reach an agreement regarding the future of Guinea, the colony where a military collapse seemed most likely to occur. Wilson and his Foreign Secretary, James Callaghan, a former Labour spokesman for colonial affairs, refrained from offering their good offices for any type of mediating role, but in May 1974, London become the venue for the first round of negotiations between Portuguese representatives and the PAIGC, while the British embassy in Algiers provided safe communications to the Portuguese delegation when the Algerian capital hosted the ensuing round of talks. Apart from this, the United Kingdom's only significant moves in the early stages of Portuguese decolonization were its decision to withhold the recognition of the PAIGC's self-proclaimed 'state' until the independence agreement had been signed, and its request to the members of the UN's ad-hoc commission set up in the previous year to investigate the Wiriaymu

[13] On British perceptions of Spinola's plans, see OLIVEIRA, *op.cit.*; on press comments see, for example, *The Times*' editorial 'Dismantling an Empire', 24 May 1974, and *The Economist*' leaders 'The Unendurable burden', 27 April 1974, and 'Straying to the Left', 11 May 1974.

atrocities to conduct its inquiries in a discreet manner while the thorny negotiations between Lisbon and the liberation movements were still being carried out.[14]

Placing the chips on FRELIMO

With the conclusion of the Lusaka agreement with FRELIMO on 7 September 1975, the first and decisive phase of Portugal's extrication from Africa was complete. The Algiers agreement regarding the independence of Guinea, signed on 26 August, had established a pattern for the transfer of power that would be replicated, with some local nuances, in the remaining territories. While accepting the latter's undisputed right to independence, Portugal would acknowledge the liberation movements recognized by such bodies as the United Nations or the Organisation of African Unity as the 'sole legitimate' representatives of the African populations and limit itself to making the practical arrangements leading to the termination of its sovereignty. Although in some cases these agreements included references to an electoral process (namely for the islands of Cape Verde and São Tomé and Príncipe, where no armed struggle had ever been carried out), the Portuguese authorities showed little interest in preventing the internationally legitimized liberation movements (the PAIGC and CLSTP) from suppressing their local rivals even before the first elections had taken place.[15]

Of all the former Portuguese colonies, Mozambique was probably the one whose future had a more direct impact on British interests, as was immediately acknowledged by Harold Wilson.[16] The reason for this was, naturally, the situation in Rhodesia, where Ian Smith's government still refused to accept the principle of majority rule. Given FRELIMO's commitment to the aspirations of black nationalism in Rhodesia, it was easy to predict that the future Mozambican state would comply with the UN sanctions against Salisbury. This was a most welcome prospect to the Wilson government, whose foreign policy record had been much tarnished by its inability to suppress Smith's Unilateral Declaration of Independence in the 1960s, and who was now trying to bolster the steps taken by Zambia and South Africa to persuade the white regime in Salisbury to accept a constitutional settlement for Rhodesia.[17]

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[14] See OLIVEIRA, *op. cit.*

[15] On this process, see Norrie MacQueen, *op. cit.*

[16] The National Archives (TNA), PREM 16/241, Letter from Tom Bridges, Wilson's private secretary, to Percy Cradock, head of the Assessments Staff of the Cabinet Office, 27 April 1974, asking for an urgent study of Lisbon's National Salvation Junta orientation in terms of African policy and its likely impact in Mozambique. *The Times*' editorial of 26 April also placed great emphasis on the pivotal role of the 'Mozambican domino'.

[17] On Wilson's first government and the Rhodesian conundrum there is now a considerable number of references. See, among others, John W. YOUNG, *The Labour Governments 1964-1970: International Policy*, Volume 2, Manchester: Manchester University Press, [2004] 2009. For the second Wilson government, the '30 year rule' has delayed a similar account based on official papers. However, see Brian LAPPING, *End of Empire*, London: Guild Publishing, 1985, pp. 510-521, and Elaine WINDRICH, *Britain and the Politics of Rhodesian Independence*, New York: Homes & Meier, 1978.

The closure of Mozambique's ports to Rhodesia's foreign trade would not render the international embargo automatically effective, but would at least make the efforts undertaken by the white regime to circumvent the sanctions more expensive,[18] and at the same time allow London to discontinue the Royal Navy's *Beira Patrol*. Given that the Lusaka agreement had made no provisions whatsoever for elections, the United Kingdom's priority was to establish a working, and, if possible, an amicable, relationship with FRELIMO, who since the Lisbon coup had managed to neutralize some potential competitors, such as GUMO,[19] and survived the counter-coup carried out by extremist members of the white community on the very same day the independence agreement was signed.[20]

With the final handover of power set for June 1974, it was time to anticipate how an independent Mozambique led by FRELIMO might affect British interests and the West in general. While acknowledging FRELIMO's debts towards some of the Communist powers, British diplomats were not fatalistic enough to envision the possible absorption of Mozambique by the Soviet or Chinese sphere of influence. They were confident that Samora Machel's instinctive 'pragmatism' would prevail over the more ideologically-minded figures of the movement (such as Marcelino dos Santos, Deputy President of FRELIMO, who was well-known for his connections with Moscow and several European Communist parties), and eventually pull the country in the direction of a 'non-aligned' stance, akin to the one adopted by the majority of OAU member states. Since Mozambique would be greatly dependent on South Africa economically,[21] it was likely that Machel might feel tempted to turn against Rhodesia as a means to secure an accommodation with Pretoria. Compliance with UN sanctions would probably cost the Mozambican state something like £20 million a year (approximately 10% of the country's annual budget), but such a gesture would enable the new government to ask members of the international community to provide some compensation for those losses. According to an early FCO internal assessment, this was where the United Kingdom could step in, either through the concession of a bilateral soft loan, or by persuading its EEC partners and other Western countries to contribute to a multilateral aid package.[22] In December 1974, this forecast was confirmed by the Ambassador in Lisbon, Nigel Trench, who visited the territory and reported some of the huge challenges that Mozambique was about to face and that would constrain its foreign policy options. Trench also had the chance to make the first high-level contact with one of FRELIMO's main leaders,

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[18] It was estimated that 70 per cent of Rhodesia's traffic with the outside world passed through Beira and Lourenço Marques, while two thirds of its oil originated from the refinery at Matola, close to the Mozambican capital.

[19] A political organisation set up in the last months of the colonial regime and led by an ambitious Macua politician, Joana Simeão.

[20] On the white settlers' failed coup, see A. D. HARVEY, 'Counter-coup in Lourenço Marques: September 7', *International Journal of Historical African Studies*, vol. 39, nº 3, 2006, which reproduces the dispatch with the account of the events by the British Consul in Lourenço Marques.

[21] Half of its revenue was generated by the proceeds from traffic charges paid by the South Africans, as well as from the remittances sent by migrant labourers working on the Rand mines.

[22] TNA, FCO 45/141, 'Brief for London Talks on Southern Africa. Mozambique', 28 August 1974.

Joaquim Chissano, the Prime Minister of the transitional government established by the Lusaka Agreement. Trench was generally impressed by the political realism displayed by several high-ranking figures of the movement, including their willingness to curb the masses' eagerness to reap the rewards of independence—impossibly higher wages and, more worryingly, high levels of alcohol consumption.[23]

In March 1975, the broad orientations of the United Kingdom's policy towards the future state were for the first time debated at an interdepartmental meeting at the FCO. The resulting discussion emphasised the need to counter the influence of Communist powers in Mozambique through a judicious use of aid programmes, financial assistance and other 'soft power' instruments, with the hope that such an approach might induce FRELIMO to favour a non-aligned orientation similar to that adopted by countries like Tanzania and Zambia.[24] While agreeing with the major premises of the document, the well-informed consul in Lourenço Marques, Stanley Duncan, nevertheless argued that he wanted 'more emphasis given to the advantages' that would accrue to the United Kingdom if FRELIMO held on to power for some time. If Machel's movement proved capable of preventing the country from sliding into 'anarchy and civil war' while winning the confidence of the remaining European minority, it would send an encouraging sign to the whites in Rhodesia and South Africa. Although it was possible to recognize strong authoritarian tendencies in its leadership, and a preference for an economic orientation that threatened to undermine British commercial interests in the country, FRELIMO was still 'the best hope for Mozambique, for Southern Africa and for us in the medium term'.[25]

Recognizing the importance of causing a first good impression, the British authorities made a significant effort to ingratiate themselves with Mozambique's future masters on the eve of the independence ceremonies. In this respect, the existence of certain personal bonds between elements of the Labour Party—such as Tony Benn, David Ennals, Judith Hart and Joan Lester—and the FRELIMO leadership was extremely important. The FCO was more than happy to explore the goodwill generated by those connections and in the final stages of the transition period stipulated by the Lusaka agreement, steps were taken to make the first official contact with FRELIMO's leadership in Dar-es-Salaam.

When such talks took place in April, Machel was shrewd enough to explore the more ambivalent record of previous Labour governments regarding Rhodesia, and suggested that an invitation for the United Kingdom to attend the independence ceremonies would be dependent upon London's attitude towards the behaviour of

[23] TNA, FCO 45/1538, 'Visit of H. M. Ambassador to the State of Mozambique', A. L. Free-Gore, 10 December 1974, and FCO 45/1732, 'Visit to Mozambique and Angola', Nigel Trench, 31 December 1974.
[24] TNA, FCO 45/1729, Minute of a meeting chaired by Martin Reid, head of CSAD, on the UK's future policy towards Mozambique, 3 March 1975.
[25] TNA, FCO 45/1732, 'British policy towards Mozambique', Stanley Duncan, 19 March 1975.

the Rhodesians vis-à-vis Mozambique.[26] The British authorities appear to have taken this as a sign that FRELIMO wished to secure some compensation for its commitment to the cause of black liberation in Rhodesia. Hence, an aid assistance of £15 million for Mozambique was announced at the Commonwealth summit in Kingston, Jamaica, in early May, taking the form of an interest-free loan repayable over 25 years—with no repayments over the first seven years. This offer, which could only be used for peaceful ends, was presented to Machel by the Minister for Overseas Development, Judith Hart, who some days later travelled to Tanzania for this specific purpose. As a gift for independence day, the United Kingdom was also happy to offer Mozambique four Land Rover jeeps, fully equipped to serve as mobile medical units.[27]

These conversations marked the beginning of an auspicious relationship between the two countries. Apart from the Dutch, the Scandinavians and the Portuguese, the United Kingdom was the only Western country invited to attend the independence ceremonies on 25 June at the Machava Stadium, on the outskirts of Maputo, formerly Lourenço Marques. Wisely, the government did not choose a member from the Royal Family but David Ennals, Minister of State at the FCO, former chairman of the Anti-Apartheid Movement and one of the founding members of a small committee set up in the early 1960s to support the struggle for freedom in Portugal and its colonies.[28] In Maputo, Ennals was officially received by the Deputy Leader of FRELIMO and soon-to-be Minister for Economic Coordination, Marcelino dos Santos—a gesture that was interpreted as the sign that FRELIMO saw the United Kingdom as a key player in the search for a negotiated settlement in Rhodesia. Apart from the discussion on the nature of British aid to Mozambique, Ennals' visit was also marked by a highly symbolic announcement: the termination of the Royal Navy's *Beira Patrol*, a mission that the Royal Navy had carried out with some degree of success, notwithstanding the frequent complaints about its cost and real effectiveness.[29]

In further assessments of Mozambique's political outlook, British officials seemed to harbour no great illusions as to what could be expected from Machel and his movement, particularly in the fields of human rights, the rule of law and economic governance. Machel's 'triumphal' tour from the Rovuma to Maputo, in the weeks which preceded the independence ceremonies, had left an extremely negative impression on the usually sympathetic Duncan. Instead of trying to 'bind the country together' and preach mutual tolerance between the different communities, Machel chose to make violent harangues against the 'colonialists' and their 'collaborators' (by which he meant the mulattos who had rejected the non-

[26] TNA, FCO 45/1730, Telegram from UK High Commissioner in Dar-es-Salaam, 27 March 1975.
[27] TNA, FCO 45/1730, Record of a meeting between President Samora Machel and other Frelimo leaders and the Rt. Hon. Judith Hart, MP, Minister of Overseas Development, State House, Dar-Es-Salaam, 10 May 1975.
[28] TNA, FCO 45/1730, Telegram from the Foreign Secretary to the UK High Commissioner in Dar-es-Salaam, 10 June 1975.
[29] TNA, FCO 45/1735, 'Mozambique independence: visit by Minister of State, the Rt. Hon. David Ennals, MP, 25-26 June 1975', Stanley Duncan, 26 June 1975.

assimilated Africans), and announced his plans for the nationalization of a considerable number of economic activities and services—including the medical and legal professions.[30]

FRELIMO was thus a modernizing movement bent on constructing a one-party state, driven by a mixture of puritanical zeal and utopian design (but not of the Khmer Rouge variety, as Duncan remarked), and very poorly equipped to run a modern economy. Although in some areas its sense of discipline, cohesion and sincere commitment to the well-being of the population had already brought positive results, in the economic sphere the damage inflicted by the dogmatic perspectives of some of its ideologues was already noticeable. On the other hand, Machel's insistence on imposing FRELIMO's austere communitarian model on the whole of society, including its forms of 'popular justice' (which involved the public flogging of wrongdoers, the use of 'people's' courts and the banning of private lawyers), was an extremely worrying development ('Where is Amnesty International now', asked Duncan in one of his reports)[31]. Therefore, in his valedictory dispatch from Maputo, Duncan thought that it might be premature to dismiss the possibility of Mozambique becoming another African version of *Animal Farm*:

> *Their particular mixture of nationalism and socialism is probably unique in Africa. Will it work? The signs are not good. Too many of the few worthwhile legacies of the colonial era are being destroyed while the useless (such as the stultifying bureaucracy) are being retained. All the inconsistencies we have come to associate with the Communist world are beginning to appear. And where there is nepotism can corruption be far behind.*[32]

Still, according to the same diplomat, the inclination already shown by the more pragmatic elements of FRELIMO to balance the influence of the various foreign powers with whom the movement had built a closer relationship over the years provided enough reasons for the West to feel moderately optimistic about its relations with the new African state. Britain in particular seemed well placed to become one of its trusted European interlocutors. All things considered, the record of its behaviour during the last stages of Portugal's colonialism was thought to have been generally decent, benefitting from the fresh memory of events such as the Labour Party's opposition to Caetano's visit to the United Kingdom in 1973, as well as from the links established between several British NGOs and Labour personalities and the FRELIMO leadership. As Duncan remarked shortly after the ceremonies which marked the handover of power: 'Once more we find ourselves thrust into a special position on the African stage. We may simply want to do nothing more than go home, put our feet up in Europe and thumb nostalgically through the Press cuttings of our African past: but Mozambique is demanding one more performance

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[30] TNA, FCO 45/1729, 'Samora Machel's Mozambique Tour', Stanley Duncan, 16 June 1975; see also further comments on the impact of Machel's speeches in 'Machel's Mozambique Tour', A. L. Free-Gore, 20 June 1975.

[31] TNA, FCO 45/1729, 'Mozambique: internal', Stanley Duncan, 18 August 1975.

[32] TNA, FCO 45/1730, 'Mozambique: valedictory dispatch', Stanley Duncan, 14 October 1975.

yet.'[33] Some of these predictions may have relied on a certain dose of wishful thinking, given the disastrous results of some of the economic policies carried out by FRELIMO, before and after its official conversion to Marxism-Leninism in 1977, and the general destabilization which the country had to endure as a result of the foreign intervention of the neighbouring racist regimes and the emergence of a guerrilla force (RENAMO)[34] sponsored by them. The human rights record of FRELIMO was also appalling in many aspects but, as predicted by Duncan, it never reached the level of brutality typical of other contemporary Socialist regimes in Africa and Asia. More significantly, the regime refused to become a client either of Moscow or Beijing—it took aid from various sides but was able to cultivate an autonomous line that in the early 1980s would enable it to strengthen ties with the main Western powers and the institutions in which their influence was great, such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.[35]

The Angolan conflict: faux pas and belated adjustments

In certain aspects, the United Kingdom's approach to Angola's transition to independence provides an interesting contrast with that of Mozambique. Here, the splitting of the nationalists into three rival groups (MPLA, FNLA[36] and UNITA), each one with its own particular sponsors, made the formulation of a coherent policy rather more complicated, especially after the collapse of the Alvor peace process and the outbreak of armed clashes in Luanda in the late spring of 1975.[37]

The internationalization of the ensuing civil war, with military interventions by countries like Zaire, Cuba and South Africa, and all sorts of covert support provided by the USA, USSR and other powers, brought Angola to the forefront of the Cold War.[38] Throughout this period, the United Kingdom was a relatively minor player on the Angolan chessboard. Even though archival restrictions make it difficult to ascertain the real extent of the more shadowy aspects of Britain's involvement

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[33] TNA, FCO 45/1729, 'Frelimo's Mozambique', Stanley Duncan, 20 June 1975.

[34] RENAMO (Resistência Nacional Moçambicana; English: Mozambican National Resistance): an anti-Communist guerrilla movement set up in 1976 with the backing of Rhodesia. It later evolved into a political organization and signed a peace agreement with FRELIMO in 1992.

[35] On the post-1975 developments in Mozambique, there are two excellent accounts: Margaret HALL & Tom YOUNG, *Confronting Leviathan: Mozambique since Independence*, London: Hurst & Co, 1997; and Malyn NEWITT, 'Mozambique' in Patrick CHABAL (ed.), *A History of Postcolonial Lusophone Africa*, London: Hurst & Co, 2002.

[36] Frente para a Libertação de Angola: the liberation movement party led by Holden Roberto.

[37] For a good introduction to the complexities of Angola's civil war see Fernando Andresen GUIMARÃES, *The Origins of the Angolan Civil War. Foreign Intervention and Domestic Political Conflict*, London: Macmillan, 2001.

[38] On the various international dimensions of Angola's hazardous independence process, see, among more recent publications, Odd Arne WESTAD, *The Global Cold War, Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006; Edward GEORGE, *The Cuban Intervention in Angola, 1965-1991, From Che Guevara to Cuito Canavale*, London: Routledge, 2005; Vladimir SHUBIN, *The Hot 'Cold War', The USSR in Southern Africa*, London: Pluto Press, 2008.

(particularly in the field of covert operations), it is probably right to assume that its diplomatic initiatives stand as the more relevant ones.

Having established a close working relationship with his American counterpart, Henry Kissinger, Britain's Foreign Secretary, James Callaghan, devoted major efforts to persuading the Ford administration to adopt a more accommodating stance towards the prospects of an MPLA victory in Angola.[39] As we shall see, Britain's chief motivating factor was to promote the de-escalation of the conflict and the rapid withdrawal of all foreign contingents from the former Portuguese colony, whose presence was perceived as a dangerous focus of destabilization in the region, threatening the *détente* policy undertaken by Kaunda and Vorster (there were hopes that this would unlock the impasse in Rhodesia), and increasing the tensions between East and West at a more global level. This, together with the need to protect the lives of British citizens in the country, formed the bedrock of the 'neutrality' policy proclaimed by Wilson's government shortly after hostilities broke out in Luanda.

Curiously, this had not been Britain's initial posture during the early stages of the Angolan conflict, when a bias in favour of UNITA had become pre-eminent in Whitehall—something that was at odds with the predominant pro-MPLA leanings of many Labour MPs, party activists and allied organizations. As a matter of fact, it had taken the FCO several months after the Lisbon coup of April 1974 to instruct its consul in Luanda to make the first informal contact with representatives of the liberation movements. It was only in November, when signs of significant progress in the formation of a transitional government became visible, that this step was taken, *after* consulting the Portuguese authorities, who remained as the administrative power in the territory.[40] A few weeks later, Nigel Trench, who stopped in Luanda after visiting Mozambique, held conversations with members of the three liberation movements. His impressions were not particularly positive: 'To judge from their representatives in Luanda, the calibre of the leaders of the MPLA, FNLA and UNITA is lower than that of FRELIMO, and they are certainly even less prepared and less fitted, for taking over the government of the territory.'[41] Above all, the lack of a 'unifying black nationalism', a problem regularly stressed by several British consuls in past reports, did not bode well for any political cooperation between the three movements. And, to make matters even more complicated, there were also the undefined ambitions of the two Congos towards Cabinda, home of a small separatist movement—the Frente de Libertação do Enclave de Cabinda (FLEC). Given this situation, Trench concluded that it was 'difficult to be optimistic' about the future of Angola.[42]

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[39] The close rapport between Callaghan and Kissinger is discussed in the former's authorized biography by Kenneth MORGAN, *Callaghan. A Life*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997, which is disappointingly thin on references to Angola's decolonization. The same can be said of Callaghan's memoir, *Time and Chance*, London: John Murray, 1987.
[40] TNA, FCO 45/1505, Letter from Martin Reid to S. E. Croft, 15 November 1974.
[41] TNA, FCO 45/1732, 'Visit to Mozambique and Angola', Nigel Trench, 31 December 1974.
[42] *Ibid.*

By the end of 1974, London's policy of 'non-involvement' in Angola had not dissuaded UNITA from trying to obtain arms in the United Kingdom, taking advantage of its position along the areas crossed by the Benguela Railway, the largest British investment in Angola and a vital route for the exports of the Copperbelt mines in Katanga and Zambia. Tanganyika Concessions, the owners of the railway, and the Zambian government of Kenneth Kaunda, a long standing ally of UNITA's leader Jonas Savimbi, appear to have been UNITA's main allies in British official circles. The head of the Central and Southern Africa Department (CSAD), Martin Reid, summed up Britain's position in a communication to the High Commissioner in Lusaka which justified the reasons for not satisfying a request for arms put forward by UNITA in December: 'We would want to have no part in encouraging violence in Angola, least of all violence between the liberation movements. Any such fighting could only result in detrimental effects on the British resident community, our commercial interests in Angola, and the economy of the country itself.'[43]

But soon after the Alvor agreement was signed in January 1975, a change was discernible in British diplomatic circles. Returning from a recent visit to Luanda, Reid was no longer so sure that the fate of Angola would be determined by peaceful and democratic means. According to him, 'the independence agreement obscures the real issue of who is going to come out on top, and […] the elections, though in theory a nice tidy way of settling it, may not succeed in avoiding a trial of strength by methods to which the liberation movements are more accustomed.'[44] Of the latter, it was UNITA and the 'charismatic' Savimbi who had made a better impression, at least judging from the tone of several reports from the British consulate in Luanda. It was also clear that the assignment of the Natural Resources portfolio to UNITA in the new transitional government had made it the most sought-after player for those British economic interests with a stake in Angola's future. In March, with arrangements being made for a high profile UNITA delegation to visit London, the British High Commissioner in Lusaka strongly recommended a warm welcome to Savimbi: 'He is articulate and realistic, and clearly an outstanding leader. He is well disposed towards Britain. He is most concerned that Angola should (not) fall into communist hands, and I think we are now all agreed that it is very much a Western interest that he should become the first head of government on independence. He also has the full support of the Zambians'.[45] While in London, Savimbi and members of his delegation made contact with directors of several firms directly involved in the exploitation of raw materials, such as Tanganyika Concessions, Rio Tinto Corporation, British Petroleum and Lonhro.[46] He was also received by Joan Lester at the FCO, where he took care to stress his firm commitment towards the electoral process and project an image of good sense and moderation. When asked for his views on the region's conflicts, he expressed his

[43] TNA, FCO 45/1505, Letter from Martin Reid to F. S. Miles, High Commissioner in Lusaka, 20 December 1974.
[44] TNA, FCO 45/1674, Letter from Reid to Nigel Trench, Ambassador in Lisbon, 6 February 1975.
[45] TNA, FCO 45/1694, Telegram from F. M. Miles to FCO, 21 March 1975.
[46] TNA, FCO 45/1694, Programme for the visit of Dr. Jonas Savimbi, President of UNITA, 9-12 April [1975].

preference for the peaceful settlement of the wars in Rhodesia and Namibia, while adding that he had made an appeal to the SWAPO leader's sense of restraint. On South Africa, he stated that UNITA did not favour a policy of 'confrontation' and recognized that the whites had 'nowhere to go', a fact that in his opinion should merit full attention from all those who urged the quick dismantling of the apartheid system.[47]

Apparently, the visit brought palpable gains to Savimbi, who was now thought to be receiving financial and other help from commercial enterprises established in Angola, particularly in the southern half of the country.[48] In a communication to the British Embassy in Kinshasa that suggested inviting Holden Roberto of FNLA to pay a similar visit to London, the head of CSAD confirmed the pro-UNITA bias of the British government. While he was not opposed to such an invitation, a distinction had to be made between the two movements: 'We would want to consider carefully, however, whether we would offer to lay on for FNLA a programme with hotel bills paid; for your own information, it suited us to do this in the case of Savimbi who named firms he wanted to see and whose attitude to foreign commercial involvement is encouraging'.[49] In a clear contrast with UNITA, the leaders of the other two Angolan movements were described in British diplomatic exchanges and situation briefs as erratic, insecure and unreliable, particularly those of the MPLA which, in addition to its strong ties with Moscow, was riddled by internal divisions and incapable of imposing a measure of discipline on its reckless urban militias. It was also becoming clear to many observers that given the demographic expression of the main ethnic groups in Angola, the MPLA and FNLA would find themselves in a less favourable position vis-à-vis UNITA, which was thought to command the overall support of the largest ethnic group, the Ovimbundos, strongly concentrated in the Bié plateau in Central Angola. However, thanks to the supremacy it had been able to secure in Luanda, and the significant amount of arms received from several socialist countries, the MPLA seemed poised to undertake a large scale bid for power on the eve of the scheduled elections. Late in May, the vice-consul in Luanda had no hesitation in attributing the main responsibility for the acceleration of the exodus of the white community from Angola to the MPLA. In his view, this was the result of Neto's resentful declarations against the Portuguese settlers, and of his acceptance of the '*poder popular*' theories espoused by the more militant elements of the movement, such as Nito Alves, who demanded that arms should be given to the population of the Luanda *musseques* known to be sympathetic towards the MPLA.[50]

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[47] TNA, FCO 45/1694, Record of a meeting between the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs and a Delegation from UNITA, held at the FCO, 10 April 1975.

[48] TNA, FCO 45/1694, Letter from B. J. Everett, in Luanda, to Martin Reid, 22 April 1975.

[49] TNA, FCO 45/1694, Letter from Martin Reid to R. J. Stevenson, Ambassador in Kinshasa, 2 May 1975.

[50] TNA, FCO 45/1676, Letter from B. J. Everett to P. M. H. Young, 22 May 1975. Everett was particularly harsh on Agostinho Neto, whom he described as 'a politician who cannot tell a big lie, so instead tells lots of little, half-lies'.

During the summer months, Luanda became the stage of a fierce battle between the three rival parties, which led to the departure *en masse* of the European population from Angola, and a military balance that, by the end of August, was favourable to the MPLA in Luanda and other coastal towns and provincial capitals. Due to security concerns, the British consulate was temporarily closed on 28 July and its staff evacuated in the following weeks in the large airlift organized by the Portuguese authorities. A CSAD paper conveyed the gist of British diplomatic perceptions concerning what was at stake in this critical stage of the conflict in Angola:

> *If an MPLA-dominated Government were to take power in Angola, or if chaos supervened, the situation could have a discouraging effect upon right wing opinion in South Africa and Rhodesia and in turn affect the chances of an early settlement in Rhodesia and Namibia. It could undermine the whole 'détente' process, which at present offers the best chance of securing peaceful solutions to the problems of Southern Africa generally. An MPLA victory could inaugurate a stormy relationship between the Governments of Angola and Zaire, since President Mobutu's support for FNLA has been total. He has designs upon the oil-rich enclave of Cabinda. President Kaunda is concerned, partly because Zambia relies heavily on the Benguela Railway, partly because of his interest in détente, and partly because of the repercussions of any adventures which President Mobutu might start.*
> *The British and general Western interests will be adversely affected by the intrusion of Iron Curtain influence into Southern Africa through the links established with Frelimo in Mozambique and the MPLA in Angola. Otherwise, British interests in Angola are relatively small.*[51]

Even though traces of a British governmental effort to bolster UNITA's chances at this critical juncture are hard to track down in the National Archives, there are indications that some covert assistance may have been organized by the MI6 officer in Lusaka, while it is most likely that Zambia served as a front for the shipment of arms and ammunitions to Savimbi. Additionally, Lonrho, owned by Tiny Rowland, a businessman with close ties to the Labour Party, is credited with an important role in providing an air service between Zambia and some of the areas controlled by UNITA in Angola.[52]

With the escalation of the fighting and the meddling of an impressive number of outside players, Angola became a classic Cold War theatre with each warring faction acting as a proxy for a powerful sponsor. On the eve of the day scheduled for independence (11 November), a strategic stalemate appeared to have been reached. The MPLA held on to its strongholds in Luanda and Benguela, but was being forced to cope with a two front threat: an assault on Cabinda undertaken by a joint force of FLEC and Zairian troops, soon followed by a South African pincer movement against Luanda involving two heavily armed columns ('Zulu Force' and 'Foxbat'),

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[51] TNA, FCO 45/1685, Paper 'Angola', Martin Reid, 17 July 1975.
[52] See Jonathan BLOCH & Patrick FITZGERALD, *British Intelligence and Covert Action. Africa, Middle East and Europe since 1945,* New York: Brandon, 1980, pp. 192-193.

composed of an assortment of Angolan troops who had fought with the Portuguese (Bushman soldiers), UNITA elements, South African regular soldiers and various foreign mercenaries. Neto was able to proclaim the independence of Angola the day after the last Portuguese High Commissioner left Luanda, but otherwise he had few reasons to celebrate. His extremely adverse position was only saved by the massive help supplied by Cuba ('Operation Carlota'), the Soviet Union and other Socialist countries—this involved the deployment of several thousand foreign troops in Angola, mostly of Cuban origin. This fact raised British apprehensions regarding the future of Angola but also of the whole Southern Africa region and East-West détente in general. However, it soon became clear that it would not be easy to bolster the MPLA's rivals, with the hope that a military stand-off might force Neto to accommodate them in a future coalition. Press revelations regarding the covert CIA operation in Angola, and the public awareness of South Africa's military intervention, strongly suspected of having received Washington's blessing, tilted the majority of the so-called 'moderate' OAU members towards the MPLA.[53]

These developments, and South Africa's intervention in particular, forced the British to review their expectations and policy options in Angola. Even though UNITA became inevitably tainted by the support it received from South Africa, Wilson's government was ready to undertake efforts to promote reconciliation between the rival movements, hoping that this would rehabilitate some of the solutions enshrined in the Alvor Agreement and prevent complete MPLA ascendancy in Luanda. This occurred as the Labour government was facing mounting pressure from the Tory opposition, whose new leader, Margaret Thatcher, was displaying a more hawkish attitude towards the Soviet and Cuban interventions in Angola. To this must also be added Britain's eagerness to align its policy with that of the Americans, in keeping with the traditional primacy enjoyed by the 'special relationship' in virtually all matters related to the more strategic dimensions of its foreign policy.[54] The Ford administration's willingness to employ all means at its disposal to prevent an MPLA victory in Angola—basically, covert funds that could be channelled without the approval of an ill-disposed Congress—was well-known in Whitehall and some cooperation was certainly carried out between the two allies in the fields of intelligence and special operations.[55]

By the end of January 1976, notwithstanding Britain's preference for a power-sharing agreement in Angola, a significant amount of thinking in Whitehall had

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[53]Concerning this stage of the conflict, see the works listed in note 35, as well as Piero GLEIJESES, *Conflicting Missions. Havana, Washington and Africa 1959-1976*, Chapel Hill: The University of North Caroline Press, 2002.

[54] Wilson's government was particularly sensitive on this point. See the appraisal by Ann LANE, 'Foreign and Defense Policy', in Kevin HICKSON & Anthony SELDON (eds.), *New Labour, Old Labour. The Wilson and Callaghan Governments, 1974-1979*, London: Routledge, 2004, pp. 154-17.

[55] On the covert programs which were carried out by the US in Angola during the civil war, see John STOCKWELL, *In Search of Enemies. A CIA Story,* New York : Norton, 1978, and Tiago MOREIRA DE SÁ, *Os Estados Unidos e a Descolonização de Angola*, Lisboa: Dom Quixote, 2011. A very sketchy reference to European covert operations in Angola at this juncture is made in Chester A. CROCKER, *High Noon in Southern Africa: Making Peace in a Rough Neighbourhood*, New York: W. W. Norton, 1992, pp. 48-49.

already been devoted to anticipating the consequences of an MPLA-dominated Angola. A CSAD paper, dated 19 December, pointed out that a quick Neto victory might render him less subservient towards Moscow: a prolonged conflict would therefore be not only pointless but also counter-productive (the real extent of Fidel Castro's support to the MPLA had not been fully grasped by the British at that moment). South Africa's intervention, and the strong suspicions that Pretoria might have received a 'green light' from Washington, undoubtedly made the situation more delicate for the West's interests in Angola, but according to British officials not everything was lost: 'The MPLA will be less well disposed to reduce their dependence on the Soviet Union and less able to resist Soviet demands for their quid pro quo. But there are nevertheless indications that, even now, the MPLA are anxious to reduce their dependence on the Soviet Union'.[56] According to the same paper, there were several things that the United Kingdom could do to obtain such an outcome: it could use its diplomatic clout to press for the departure of all foreign troops from Angola; it could continue its efforts to ensure the formation of 'a broadly based government including at least UNITA' in Angola; and, if the latter objective was not attainable, it could at least do its best to prevent its Western partners from alienating the MPLA, 'and look for ways of developing contact with and influence on the MPLA'. The small committee chaired by Ennals that reviewed the Angolan situation in late December considered that the paper underestimated the dependence of Agostinho Neto towards the USSR but endorsed the main thrust of the CSAD argument.[57]

In the following weeks, these were the fundamental guidelines that underpinned the United Kingdom's policy towards the conflict in Angola. While it tried to impress upon the Cuban, Soviet and South African authorities the importance of an evacuation of their military personnel from Angola,[58] the Wilson government hoped to establish informal contact with the MPLA through various entities, such as the *Casa de Angola*, in Lisbon—an unsuccessful attempt, however. With its consulate in Luanda closed since the previous summer, and no official contacts before 1974,[59] the British authorities were deprived of reliable channels to communicate with the leadership of the MPLA after its proclamation of independence in November 1975—a fact that would complicate matters considerably after London later agreed to recognise Neto's government.

To make matters worse, in January, the British press was awash with reports concerning the departure to Angola of dozens of mercenaries recruited in the United Kingdom by a private firm, Security Advisory Service, allegedly using funds provided by the CIA and Zaire. Although recruited in modest numbers and

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[56] TNA, FCO 15/1688, Paper: 'Angola', from the Central and Southern Africa Department, 19 December 1975.
[57] TNA, FCO 15/1688, Summary Record of the Conclusions of Mr. Ennals' Meeting, 19 December 1975.
[58] TNA, FCO 45/1685, Telegrams by James Callaghan to Washington, 22 December, and Havana, 23 December 1975.
[59] Contacts between the Labour Party and allied organizations, such as the Anti-Apartheid Movement, and the MPLA appear to have been much less significant than the ones established with FRELIMO, or even the PAIGC.

displaying combat behaviour that oscillated between the amateurish and the criminal, these 'dogs of war' proved to be a major source of irritation in future relations between London and Luanda. A number of them were made prisoners by the FAPLA (Popular Armed Forces of the Liberation of Angola) and Cubans in the North of Angola and were later put on trial for their 'war crimes' in an *ad hoc* 'revolutionary court' set up in Luanda. In March 1976, four of them were sentenced to the death penalty, and others got long prison sentences. A plea of mercy from Queen Elizabeth II was ignored and those filling the Luanda prisons were exhibited by the Angolan authorities as an example of what would happen to anyone who engaged in conspiracies to overthrow the new regime.[60]

Even though until the end of January 1976 the US administration, and Henry Kissinger in particular, still hoped that extra covert military assistance to UNITA[61] might secure a more satisfactory stalemate in Angola,[62] the British government began to act upon the assumption that an Angola dominated by the MPLA, or at least with prominent MPLA representation in any future government, was virtually inevitable. Not only was the situation on the ground becoming increasingly favourable to the FAPLA and the Cubans after their decisive victories in Quifangongo and Ambriz, but the opinion of the majority of the OAU members was now tilting towards the MPLA in an apparently irresistible manner, thanks to the notoriety achieved by South Africa's intervention. A certain degree of Soviet ascendency in Angola had to be accepted—this was the realistic assessment made by several officials in London. The Western powers, the United Kingdom included, had for years neglected the aspirations of Angolan nationalists, whereas the USSR, notwithstanding some ups and downs, had cultivated a fifteen-year relationship with Neto's movement.[63] The only sensible option for the West, therefore, was to make the best out of a very delicate situation. The fact that several African countries were uncomfortable with the idea of a large Soviet and Cuban presence in Angola was a circumstance that could be exploited by the West in order to mitigate Moscow's influence in Luanda. The critical element, as stressed in several Foreign and Commonwealth Office or Joint Intelligence Committee assessment papers, was South Africa's presence in Angola. As long as Pretoria's contingents remained in the former Portuguese colony, it would be extremely difficult to persuade the MPLA leadership and the more moderate African nations to press for a withdrawal of Cubans troops and Soviet military advisors. Still, it was thought that, similarly to what had happened in other countries, the Angolan regime would try to establish clear water between itself and its main backers. As stated in a report by the Joint Intelligence Committee:

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[60] There are a significant number of FCO files at the National Archives for the years of 1976 and 1977 that provide a considerable amount of information on this affair. Various accounts, of disputable objectivity, also provide interesting insights. See, for instance, Wilfred BURCHET & Derek ROEBUCK, *The Whores of War. Mercenaries Today*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1977, and Chris DEMPSTER & David TOMKINS, *Fire Power,* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980.

[61] The FNLA had ceased to be a relevant player since the fall of its strongholds in the North in the early days of January, and was soon deserted by Mobutu and the Americans.

[62] TNA, FCO 45/1884, Brief 'Angola' by A. H. Campbell, 26 January 1976.

[63] TNA, FCO 45/1882, See James Callaghan's telegrams to Washington, 9 January 1976, and the UK Mission to NATO, 13 January 1976.

> *Newly independent countries have shown little gratitude to their previous sponsors and they tend to develop strong, sometimes extreme, nationalistic tendencies. Having rid themselves of their formal imperial master, they appear determined to avoid coming under new domination. It is noticeable that even the puniest of independent African states feels no compunction in rebuffing on occasion a super-power, whether the United States or the Soviet Union. There is no reason to expect the MPLA to react differently; they are regarded by some other African states as exceptionally nationalistic and intransigent.*[64]

The pragmatic appraisal of several officials in Whitehall, largely shared by James Callaghan, was vindicated in the following months. For one thing, the conditions for effective US support to UNITA were starting to crumble as a consequence of the Clark Amendment approved by Congress in late December and signed by President Ford in January. Such an ominous development was not lost on South Africa's Prime minister, John Vorster, who decided to retreat from Angola on 14 January—an evacuation that was completed in late March 1976 when the last South African troops crossed the border into Namibia. Secondly, by mid-February African diplomatic recognition of the MPLA regime (including from countries that had previously been opposed to that action, such as Zambia or Kenya) had reached a point of no return, despite the efforts undertaken by Kissinger to frustrate such an outcome. With Luanda's government now in control of approximately two thirds of the territory, including the whole length of the Benguela Railway, Britain's standard criteria to recognize a new regime were fulfilled. Even though the Tory opposition was reluctant to accept any concessions to the MPLA while the Cubans remained on Angola's soil, Wilson's government was by now able to justify the recognition of Neto's regime through the need to adopt a common position with its EEC partners, the majority of which were similarly inclined. On 18 February, the United Kingdom's recognition of the 'People's Republic of Angola' and the government in Luanda was announced. In the House of Commons, Callaghan refuted the objections made by Tory backbenchers by arguing that 'recognition' was not synonymous with 'approval' and claimed that Britain's aim was to initiate a relationship with Angola based on goodwill and cooperation.[65] In Whitehall, the possibility of offering 'technical assistance' and a 'capital grant' to Angola was already being discussed.[66]

Unfortunately for the British authorities, the establishment of such a friendly relationship would prove exceedingly difficult. Not only did incidents such as the mercenaries' trial and execution poison the dialogue between Luanda and London, but the MPLA government was apparently determined to make the United Kingdom pay a price for the preference it had showed towards UNITA until a relatively late stage of the conflict. Although the British government played a minor role in facilitating the withdrawal of the last South African troops,[67] this was not sufficient to earn the gratitude of the MPLA. According to its priorities, Luanda would give

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[64] TNA, CAB 190/100, Paper 'The Soviet Union and the MPLA: likely future relationship', Joint Intelligence Committee, 26 January 1976.
[65] *The Times*, 'Recognition of Angola: MPLA fulfill criteria', 19 February 1976.
[66] TNA, FCO 45/1884, Brief 'Angola', H. M. S Reid, 3 February 1976.
[67] TNA, FCO 45/1886, Excerpt from Cabinet minute, 24 March 1976.

preference to the opening of foreign embassies and consulates to 'countries that showed sympathy with their struggle for independence', followed by 'countries that did not directly or indirectly support attacks on Angolan territory'[68]. It soon became clear that the MPLA regime did not include the United Kingdom in either of these categories. In practical terms, this meant that the two countries would only reach an agreement for the opening of a British embassy in Luanda in 1978.

With the first phase of the civil war in Angola approaching its end (by mid-March nearly all significant military confrontations had ceased and the SADF contingents were on their way home), it became time to draw up a balance sheet and think about the immediate future. This task was carried out in the first half of 1976 by several departments and officials at the FCO. By the end of February, shortly after the recognition of the MPLA government, the head of the CSAD was forced to admit that the Soviets had clearly gained the upper hand in Angola and would be tempted to repeat their success elsewhere in the continent, 'provided they can [...] represent themselves as making common cause with black Africa in a crusade against white minority rule in Southern Africa'. The most likely scenarios for the next Soviet (and Cuban) intervention would be Namibia, Rhodesia, Zaire and Zambia—the second posing enormous problems for the United Kingdom given its legal responsibilities and direct involvement in the search for a political compromise between the white minority and local African nationalists. Should the Russians and Cubans embark on new adventures, the West's stance had to be absolutely firm: 'Our response [...] should be to make urgent efforts to contain the Russians and Cubans in Angola itself, to deny them opportunities to intervene elsewhere in the region and, when circumstances permit, to mobilise African and international pressure to force their withdrawal.'[69]

The post-mortem on the Angolan morass was eventually carried out by the FCO's Research Department in May 1976. Relying on its own sources, as well as incorporating comments and contributions from various missions and departments, the paper tried to make sense of the timing, motives and objectives of the major foreign interventions in Angola, with the exception of that of South Africa. It concluded, although in a hypothetical vein, that Soviet involvement had essentially been driven by a mixture of opportunism ('to probe the parameters of détente', in order to gain a strategic bridgehead in Africa) and ideological rectitude (solidarity with Third World 'anti-imperialist' movements), while the Cubans, whose record of supporting liberation struggles in Africa was already considerable, accepted their role as surrogates of the USSR to avoid upsetting the global balance of East-West détente. For their part, the Americans were deemed to have been too absorbed by other problems—CSCE and SALT negotiations, the crisis in the Middle East, etc.—to acquire early awareness of what was at stake in Angola, and afterwards became limited by the negative impact of South Africa's intervention. The paper was willing to concede that the United Kingdom had shown a certain 'slowness' in reacting to

[68] TNA, FCO 45/1885, Brief 'Angola: Diplomatic Relations', H. M. S. Reid, 26 December 1976.
[69] TNA, FCO 45/1885, Paper 'The immediate outlook in Central and Southern Africa', 20 February 1976.

events but—in a fit of self-indulgence—such a failure was perceived as a consequence of the effectiveness of Soviet and Cuban 'concealment':

> *It can be said on the basis of this limited inquiry that, when developments in Angola became known to us, appropriate adjustments—vis-à-vis Cuba, the Soviet Union, and the countries of Southern Africa—were made promptly and empirically. [...] The important question therefore is whether we could have obtained earlier information and displayed longer anticipation. The Russians and the Cubans conceal their hands very competently and the West clearly needs better sources of information on Cuba. Few general or adequate conclusions about Soviet and Cuban intentions were drawn from the concatenation of events around Angola.*[70]

Concluding remarks

The United Kingdom's record concerning Portugal's decolonization in Southern Africa was a mixed one. Mozambique's independence was a successful episode for British diplomacy. First, the fact that FRELIMO was the only liberation movement recognized by various international bodies ruled out any hesitation concerning the choice of the 'proper' interlocutor in the period prior to the independence agreement. Secondly, the friendly relationship which existed between FRELIMO's leadership and several prominent figures from Labour's more progressive wing, some of them occupying junior ministerial positions at the FCO in 1974-75, proved to be an extremely fortunate coincidence, which was skilfully exploited by the government. Thirdly, the quality and accuracy of the consular reports sent from Lourenço Marques/Maputo should also be noted. The British representative there, a seasoned diplomat with several years of experience in Portugal and Mozambique, was able to grasp very quickly the fundamental factors of the political situation in the territory, the most salient of them being the capacity displayed by FRELIMO to neutralise all potential rivals and secure an almost unassailable position in the first critical weeks after the Lisbon coup. Duncan was also shrewd in his analysis of the political and ideological dimensions of FRELIMO, even if he overestimated the 'realism' of its leadership—after 1977 they would prove highly susceptible to the promises of a 'modernizing' approach which was closer to the precepts of orthodox Marxism-Leninism than to Julius Nyerere's *Ujamaa*. Still, his notion that Machel would try to balance foreign influences in Mozambique and avoid committing his foreign policy to one of the main Communist powers, the Soviet Union or China, was largely vindicated by events. The United Kingdom would also benefit from Machel's alignment with the sanctions policy against Southern Rhodesia, as well as from his moderating influence over Robert Mugabe, whom he was able to persuade to take part in the Lancaster House negotiations of 1979, and accept the need to make certain concessions to the Rhodesian white farmers. Throughout Mozambique's civil war between FRELIMO and RENAMO (1976-1992), the United Kingdom continued to cultivate a close relationship with Maputo's regime—which would be symbolically

[70] TNA, FCO 51/425, Paper 'Angola's Post Mortem: the Soviet Cuban Intervention', Michael Duncan, Research Department, 3 May 1976.

crowned in 1995 with Mozambique's membership of the Commonwealth, a remarkable exception to the "Anglocentric" scope of this organisation.

Relations with Angola evolved in a very different manner. As I have tried to demonstrate, Britain's official 'neutrality' and 'non-intervention' policy had its flaws, particularly in the period immediately after the Alvor agreement, when a bias towards UNITA was noticeable and assistance to Savimbi's movement appears to have been facilitated or encouraged. Inevitably, this would be resented by the MPLA, who emerged in early 1976 from the first phase of Angola's protracted civil war (1974-2002) as the victorious party. In addition to this, the closure of its Consulate in Luanda in the summer of 1975 deprived London of a reliable source of information on the ground and a channel to communicate directly with the MPLA, once its government was recognised in February 1976. The history of the pre-1974 contacts with Agostinho Neto's movement is also a factor to be taken into account: with a predominately Francophone and Lusophone elite, and a much more pronounced pattern of dependence towards Moscow than other Lusophone liberation movements, the MPLA appears to have enjoyed only a modicum of sympathy from the more *engagé* sectors of the Labour Left. More crucially, the Cold War dimensions of Angola's transition to independence weighed heavily in Britain's perceptions and resulting options towards the different players. On the one hand, Kissinger's determination to prevent a Communist take-over in Angola could not be ignored by a Labour administration that was keenly committed to the maintenance of its 'special relationship' with Washington. Even though London did its best to avoid becoming hostage to Kissinger's unrealistic stance, its association with some American initiatives—such as its attempt to persuade European allies and OAU members to defer recognition to Luanda's regime after January 1976—carried a high price in the short and medium term. On the other hand, its efforts to promote reconciliation between the warring parties, to set an example for the other conflicts in Southern Africa and prevent a permanent Soviet and Cuban military encroachment in the region, was also a damaging option in the light of the somewhat 'hubristic' mood that prevailed in Luanda after 1976.

While in Mozambique a fortunate combination of circumstances, a realistic assessment of the situation on the ground and bold policy moves ensured Britain a rewarding diplomatic triumph, in Angola the bitterness of the local power struggles, poor intelligence and the many strategic complexities of the Cold War conspired to make the United Kingdom, along with the United States, one of the net losers of the transition process set in motion by Portugal's end of empire.

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The Rwandan Genocide of 1994: A Comparison of Why the United Kingdom and the United States Did Not Intervene

Dean WHITE
Northumbria University

The Rwandan genocide of 1994 is unquestionably one of the most horrific events of the late twentieth century; in the space of one hundred days, at least 750,000 men, women and children were killed. The literature largely concentrates on condemning the international community for failing to intervene to stop the genocide in a more timely and robust manner, but the subject has received relatively little attention in studies of British foreign policy. Whilst there is existing literature relating to the US response, including works by Samantha Power, Holly Burkhalter and Jared Cohen,[1] the British response to events in Rwanda has been largely ignored, and what there is misinterprets the actions and motives of the British government. As Mark Curtis suggests in rather emotive language, Rwanda 'has been apparently written out of [British foreign policy] history [and] there has been', he continues, 'complete silence by the media and academics [on] Britain's role in the slaughter'.[2] This paper investigates how the US and British governments shaped and reacted to UN Security Council debates on Rwanda, compares the responses of the two governments to the genocide and addresses the issue of why they apparently remained passive throughout the killing.

The criticism of the international community

With very few exceptions, the existing literature is critical of the international community's response to the events of 1994. Recalling the Genocide Convention of 1948, Ingvar Carlsson notes, '[t]he members of the Security Council have a particular responsibility, morally if not explicitly under the Convention, to react when faced with a situation of genocide' and they failed to do so in Rwanda.[3] Similarly, Linda Melvern suggests that, having established a peace-keeping mission in the country in 1993, the UN had a responsibility to stop the genocide when it

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[1] Samantha POWER, *A Problem From Hell: America and the Age of Genocide,* London: Flamingo, 2003; Holly BURKHALTER, 'The Question of Genocide: The Clinton Administration and Rwanda,' *World Policy Journal,* vol. 11, n° 4, 1994; Jareh COHEN, *One Hundred Days of Silence: America and the Rwanda Genocide,* Lasham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007.

[2] Mark CURTIS, 'Britain's Real Foreign Policy and the Failure of British Academia,' *International Relations,* vol. 18, n° 13, 2004, p. 281.

[3] Ingvar CARLSSON, 'The UN Inadequacies,' *Journal of International Criminal Justice,* vol. 3, n° 4, 2005, p. 844

began in 1994 but did not even try.[4] Amongst all members of the international community, the USA, along with France,[5] is held up for special criticism for failing to intervene earlier or for not having done more to halt the killing in Rwanda. Holly Burkhalter writes: 'The Clinton Administration, facing what was the clearest case of genocide in fifty years, responded by downplaying the crisis diplomatically and impeding effective intervention by UN forces to stop the killing'.[6] Even more critically, Cohen finds that 'the US role was monumental in the collective failure and its moral shortcoming was substantial'.[7] Whilst criticism of the United Kingdom's lack of response is less widespread, the government of John Major is also held up as having failed the people of Rwanda. General Romeo Dallaire, who commanded the UN peace-keeping force in Rwanda, accuses both the American and British governments of 'shirking their legal and moral responsibilities' in Rwanda by failing to act sooner.[8] Michael Barnett, an American academic and a secondee to the State Department in 1994, argued that 'Britain fought against the initial push for intervention in April and then shifted position in May when it had overwhelming evidence of the genocide.'[9]

In terms of motivation, it has been widely assumed since 1994 that British action, or perhaps more accurately inaction, was driven by the United States' reluctance to become involved. Cohen, for example, suggests that the role of the United States is 'essential to understanding' the failure of major powers to intervene.[10] Whilst for some analysts like Mark Curtis, there is nothing unusual about the United Kingdom following the American lead—the Security Council, as he sees it, 'is a tightly run ship organised by the British on behalf of the Americans'[11]—this specific theory possibly arose out of UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's publicly stated belief that there was a deliberate 'US effort to prevent the effective deployment of a UN force for Rwanda', and that this blockage 'succeeded with the strong support of Britain'.[12] Both Alison Des Forges, the Human Rights Watch expert on Rwanda, and Richard Dowden, the current director of the Royal African Society, agree, suggesting that US policy was firmly

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[4] Linda MELVERN, "The Security Council: Behind the Scenes," *International Affairs,* vol. 77, n° 1, 2001, p. 108.

[5] The French government has also been strongly criticised for supplying the Rwandan government and militias with weapons used to carry out the genocide and possibly for involvement in the shooting down of President Habyarimana's plane. For further examination of French involvement, see Andrew WALLIS, *Silent Accomplice: The Untold Story of France's Role in the Rwandan Genocide*, London: I. B. Tauris, 2007; Daniela KROSLAK, *The Role of France in the Rwandan Genocide*, London: Hurst & Company, 2007; Gérard PRUNIER, *The Rwandan Crisis: History of a Genocide*, London: Hurst & Company, 2005.

[6] BURKHALTER, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

[7] COHEN, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

[8] Romeo DALLAIRE, Kishan MANOCHA & Nishan DEGNARAIN, 'The Major Powers on Trial,' *Journal of International Criminal Justice,* vol. 3, n° 4, 2005, p. 877.

[9] Michael BARNETT, *Eyewitness to a Genocide: The United Nations and Rwanda*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003, p. 171.

[10] COHEN, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

[11] Mark CURTIS, *The Ambiguities of Power: British Foreign Policy Since 1945*, London: Zed Books, 1995, p. 183.

[12] International Panel of Eminent Personalities, *Rwanda: The Preventable Genocide,* Organisation of African Unity, 1999, p. 87.

supported by the United Kingdom. Des Forges notes that throughout the early discussions at the Security Council, the American point of view was shared by other members 'described as "Western" and "permanent"'—a fairly unambiguous indication that here she means the United Kingdom.[13] Dowden, more explicitly, states: 'The US, backed by Britain and Belgium, forced the UN Security Council to cut the peace-keeping force as the genocide plan was rolled out across Rwanda'.[14] Melvern and Williams also reach this conclusion and even suggest that both the United Kingdom and the United States were 'demanding stringent cost-cutting' at the UN following an escalation of peace-keeping missions in the previous five years, and that Rwanda was a victim of this cost-reduction process.[15] The response to the crisis is then, for some, an example of what Henry Kissinger suggested is the best role for Britain in foreign policy: acting as an arm of the US administration.[16] The existing literature, therefore, argues that the British representatives simply cast their votes on the Security Council as directed by the United States.

This article, however, contends that this interpretation is an over-simplification of the actual position of the United Kingdom. Firstly, it seeks to add to the scant work on Britain and Rwanda. Secondly, it seeks to understand what motivated the United States and the United Kingdom to respond in the way that they did. Finally, the paper challenges the assumption that the United Kingdom had no Rwanda policy independent of the United States. Although it is evident that neither the Major government nor the Clinton administration proactively intervened to stop the genocide, the two countries responded in quite different ways and with quite different motivations.

Background to the crisis

Formerly a Belgian colony, Rwanda gained its independence in 1962, but the end of empire was not a peaceful one. Throughout the colonial period, the Belgians had favoured the Tutsi minority, who made up only fifteen per cent of the population. In 1959, the Hutu majority rebelled: in a violent revolution, hundreds of Tutsi were murdered, thousands were forced to flee to refugee camps in neighbouring Uganda and Tanzania, and a new Hutu elite came to power. Despite some ethnic violence, the Hutu domination of Rwanda continued essentially unopposed until 1990. Then, in October of that year, in an effort to force a return to their homeland, and capitalising on the domestic disputes amongst the newly-legalised political parties in Rwanda, the Tutsi-dominated Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) crossed the border from bases in Uganda. The assault was only halted when a French commando unit, sent on the personal instructions of President François Mitterrand, reinforced the government's army. The civil war between the RPF and

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[13] Alison DES FORGES, *Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda*, New York: Human Rights Watch, 1999, p. 603.
[14] Richard DOWDEN, *Africa: Altered States, Ordinary Miracles*, London: Portobello Books, 2009, p. 115.
[15] MELVERN & WILLIAMS, *op. cit.*, p. 7.
[16] Quoted in Caroline KENNEDY-PIPE, 'Britain in the International Arena,' in Patrick DUNLEAVY (ed.), *Developments in British Politics 7,* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, p. 326.

the Rwandan government forces continued for the next three years, and the French military, on the orders of Mitterrand, slowly increased the number of 'advisers' sent to the country. Although French troops were not technically involved in the civil war, there are numerous eye-witness accounts of French soldiers directing artillery fire onto the RPF, flying military helicopters or manning check points across Rwanda.

In 1993, under pressure from regional leaders as well as the French and the US governments (both leading aid donors to Rwanda), the RPF and the Rwandan government met to negotiate a peace settlement. Due to the fact that the Rwandan government was largely represented by leaders of political parties opposed to the President but with seats in Cabinet, the settlement, known as the Arusha Accords, was not particularly favourable to the President and his supporters. At the request of the two parties, the UN agreed to send a peace-keeping force to Rwanda in October 1993 (the United Nations Assistance Mission to Rwanda—UNAMIR) and the French troops which were still in the country withdrew. UNAMIR was mandated to oversee the establishment of a transitional government and the merger of the two armies. However, by April 1994, little progress had been made towards either goal, and ethnic violence was openly escalating, particularly on the streets of Kigali, where unemployed youths were being formed into militias. On 6 April 1994, the plane of President Juvenal Habyarimana, flying home from a conference in Dar-es-Salam, was shot down. Immediately, a massacre of Tutsi and politically moderate Hutu began. Amongst the first victims of the killing spree were eleven Belgian peace-keepers serving with UNAMIR. Within days, all foreign nationals had been evacuated by French, Belgian and Italian paratroopers; the Belgian government announced that its troops would be withdrawn; and Bangladeshi troops within UNAMIR mutinied, refusing to leave their barracks. It was in these circumstances that the UN Security Council met to define a response to the crisis.

UN Resolution 912—Disagreement on withdrawing UNAMIR

Other than statements deploring the renewed violence and calling on both sides to return to the negotiating table, the first significant response from the UN Security Council came two weeks after the outbreak of violence and was, to the astonishment of experts familiar with Rwanda, a decision to reduce UNAMIR's troop levels from 2,500 to approximately 270. Both the Americans and the British voted in favour of Resolution 912. But over the days preceding the vote, they demonstrated quite different approaches to the situation in Rwanda.

With violence flaring up across the country and the death of the Belgian peace-keepers, the Clinton administration immediately foresaw another 'Somalia'. In October 1993, eighteen US Rangers, operating in the country as part of a UN-mandated peace-enforcement mission, had been killed in the Somali capital, Mogadishu, on a mission to capture a warlord accused of killing Pakistani peace-keepers a few months earlier. The horror of the deaths was magnified in the United States: images of a captured US pilot were first shown on Somali television, before footage of one dead soldier being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu appeared on CNN. In response to this incident, and under immense public pressure, Clinton promised to withdraw all American troops from Somalia. The tendency to

fight the last war meant that the events in Rwanda so soon after this fiasco were viewed through a 'Somali lens', and the fear of another Mogadishu terrified American decision-makers, especially in the Pentagon. Viewing Rwanda through this lens, and taking into account the perceived limited short-term prospects for peace, as well as the apparent threat to UN peace-keepers, the US State Department concluded that the only feasible option was for UNAMIR to be withdrawn immediately. Instructions were sent to the US Ambassador to the UN, Madeleine Albright, on 15 April:

> *Department has considered the prospect of additional wide scale conflict and violence in Rwanda, and the threat [...] to remaining foreign civilian and military personnel [...] Taking these factors into account Department believes that there is insufficient justification to retain a UN peace-keeping presence in Rwanda and that the international community must give highest priority to full, orderly withdrawal of all UNAMIR personnel as soon as possible.*[17]

With no peace to keep and violence increasing, the State Department believed the mission would inevitably fail and this was seen as a threat to the reputation of UN peace-keeping. Another failed mission so soon after failure in Somalia, they concluded, would be fatal to the concept of UN peace-keeping.

The British, on the other hand, did not automatically support full withdrawal and instead called for various options to be considered. The British delegation at the UN suggested that there were four possible responses available to the Security Council: authorise a reinforcement of UNAMIR; maintain the status quo; withdraw UNAMIR completely; or partially withdraw, leaving a small UN force in the capital, Kigali. David Hannay, the United Kingdom's Permanent Representative at the UN, conscious of the Belgian withdrawal from UNAMIR, concluded that maintaining the status quo was not a feasible option, and recognising the obvious US reluctance to become involved, was also realistic about the likelihood of reinforcing UNAMIR. Left with the option of either full or partial withdrawal, Hannay concluded that there was a role for UNAMIR in Rwanda, both to protect civilians and to facilitate new ceasefire talks. The United Kingdom delegation therefore argued strongly in favour of the fourth option—partial withdrawal only. Whereas the United States argued that anything short of full withdrawal risked damaging the reputation of the UN, the British maintained that a full withdrawal would instead highlight the impotency of UN peace-keeping and indicate to warring parties across the globe that killing a few western soldiers would automatically lead the UN to withdraw. In direct contradiction to the US view, Hannay therefore argued that to withdraw completely would harm the reputation of the UN.

Hannay recalls how he was approached by Madeleine Albright in the Security Council chamber before the vote on Resolution 912. Albright explained how she had been instructed to vote in favour of a full withdrawal. Hannay continues: 'I said [to

[17] US Department of State, cable n° 099440, to US Mission to the United Nations, New York, 'Talking points for UNAMIR withdrawal', 15 April 1994, <www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB53/rw041594.pdf> (accessed 12 June 2010).

Madeleine Albright] I thought that would really not do. The peace-keeping force might not be able to carry on with its original mandate, but it might be able to perform some humanitarian tasks and to save lives. The UK would not be supporting any requests for a full withdrawal. Could she not get her instructions changed?'[18] Despite not fully appreciating the situation in Rwanda, the British realised that UNAMIR was doing key work in protecting civilians at a handful of sites across Kigali and that UNAMIR was well placed to negotiate between the warring parties. The British view prevailed. Albright, bypassing the State Department, phoned a senior official at the National Security Council: 'I first asked them for more flexible instructions, then yelled into the phone, demanding them'.[19] Albright eventually voted in favour of a partial, rather than a full and immediate, withdrawal. The intervention of David Hannay alone was probably not sufficient to change the American vote on Resolution 912, but it can certainly be said to have been timely and influential.

Alternative views on UNAMIR II

By early May, it was apparent to policy-makers across the world that what was happening in Rwanda was more than civil war spilling over into the deaths of civilians. There was by now clear evidence of genocide. In the first two weeks of May, opinion at the UN therefore began to shift and discussions on what should be done in Rwanda were renewed. Again, the United States and the United Kingdom had quite different approaches to this question.

Despite the evidence of genocide, Washington, and again especially the Pentagon, remained paralysed by the fear that the United States may actually have to become involved. Although there is ample evidence that the United States was fully aware of what was happening in the country and that some junior officials in the State Department were arguing for action, the US government appears to have made every effort to avoid its own involvement. Although options were considered, the response was always the same—there was a reason why direct US involvement should be avoided. In one example, the State Department briefly considered jamming *Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines*, a privately-owned radio station which was broadcasting ferocious anti-Tutsi and genocidal propaganda across Rwanda. However, the idea was quickly rebutted by officials and military advisers at the Pentagon, who initially raised legal arguments against the plan, highlighted the cost and presumed inefficiency of the scheme, before they finally argued that jamming a civilian radio station would infringe the right to free speech and was therefore in breach of the US constitution. A Department of Defense internal memorandum of 11 May highlights the fact that the Pentagon was simply not prepared to risk US military assets: 'Joint Staff and we strongly object to signing up for open-ended missions that could lead to troops being in life-threatening situations

[18] David HANNAY, *New World Disorder: The UN after the Cold War. An Insider's View*, London: I. B. Tauris, 2008, p. 167.
[19] Madeleine ALBRIGHT, *Madam Secretary: A Memoir*, London: Macmillan, 2003, p. 150.

without proper arms' or rules of engagement.[20] The memo continues to suggest that it was not just US involvement that was opposed; the United States did not support any troops being deployed so that it would not, ultimately, have to rescue any mission sent to Rwanda.

The one option that the United States was willing to pursue at this stage was the establishment of safe havens in neighbouring countries. Under this option, UN troops would deploy to Tanzania and Burundi and would ensure the safety of any refugees that could make it to the protected areas—a plan Samantha Power has dubbed 'outside-in'.[21] Although no definitive offer was made, there was a clear implication that the US military would be willing to contribute to such a mission by providing airlift and logistical support. But despite the fact that this option was sponsored by the United States, it was not acceptable to the British. On 3 June, a Foreign Office telegram to the United Kingdom Mission at the UN in New York stated: 'We are not clear where, for example, it is envisaged that the secure areas will be established given that massacres continue behind RGF [i.e. government] lines'.[22] David Hannay recalls his response to the American plan: 'People were being killed inside Rwanda, not outside. You weren't going to stop the genocide by operating in Uganda or Tanzania'.[23] Hannay goes as far as to question whether even the Americans actually believed the outside-in strategy was a feasible idea, or whether it was just a diplomatic ploy to look less obstructive at the UN.

What the British were now championing, instead, was the deployment of a new reinforced UNAMIR II, made up of African troops. Whilst the US State Department had considered this idea briefly, the Pentagon had already concluded that Africa did not have the capability to undertake such an operation.[24] The British, however, were actively encouraging African nations to contribute troops.[25] For Britain, this was an African problem that required an African solution. An editorial in the Scottish newspaper *The Herald* reflected this belief, arguing: 'If there is to be intervention in Rwanda it would be best under the aegis of the Organisation of African Unity and come from other African states. These collectively have the appropriate military force and their troops might not encounter the animosity which would greet the arrival of Western soldiers'.[26] The British plan, in direct contradiction to the US plan, therefore called for African troops to deploy to Kigali

[20] Memorandum of conversation, Office of Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence for Middle East/Africa Region, Department of Defence, 11 May 1994, <www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB53/rw051194.pdf> (accessed 12 June 2010).
[21] Samantha POWER, 'Bystanders to Genocide: Why the United States Let the Rwandan Tragedy Happen', *The Atlantic Monthly,* September 2001.
[22] FCO telegraph to UK Mission to UN (New York), 3 June 1994; released to the author under the Freedom of Information Act.
[23] Interview with David HANNAY, 23 April 2010.
[24] Discussion paper, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence for Middle East/Africa Region, Department of Defence, 1 May 1994, <www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB53> (accessed 12 June 2010).
[25] Interview with David HANNAY, 23 April 2010; interview with Malcolm RIFKIND, 22 March 2010.
[26] Anon, 'Intervention in Rwanda', *The Herald*, 2 May 1994, p. 10.

and work their way from there across the country; 'inside-out' rather than 'outside-in'.

Opposing views on Operation Turquoise

Eventually, the Security Council approved the creation of UNAMIR II in late May. However, the United States continued to stall the mission by demanding various reports from the UN Secretary-General before agreeing to actual troop deployment. The military response to the crisis was therefore stalled as the Secretary-General first dealt with the US demands, and secondly, sought to find nations willing to contribute troops to the new force when it was apparent to all that the United States did not support the mission. At this time, Mitterrand announced that France would seek UN approval to deploy a unilateral Chapter VII mission to protect civilians in Rwanda. Operation Turquoise deployed on 23 June 1994, having been approved by the UN Security Council the previous day. Although officially a humanitarian mission, Turquoise was made up of over 3,000 elite troops, 100 armoured personnel carriers, jet fighter aircraft, helicopters and light artillery—a troop mix more suited for fighting a small war than protecting refugee camps. The US and the UK responses to the French mission again show some differences. Whilst the US State Department appears to have warmly welcomed the proposed intervention, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) was clearly suspicious of France's intentions.

Correspondence between the FCO and Hannay in New York shows that the mission did not have the wholehearted support of the government. Although heavily phrased, one telegram, released under the Freedom of Information Act, begins: '[We are] ready to support a resolution backing the French plan, but remain concerned about its effect on UNAMIR and on the credibility of UN peace-keeping generally'.[27] The document continues to warn that despite the FCO's nervousness, the mission in New York should not be 'associated with any attempts to sabotage' France's proposed resolution. In interviews with the author, various British officials, both within the FCO and the Ministry of Defence (MOD), confirmed that whilst the United Kingdom was suspicious of French motives, no serious consideration was given to vetoing the plan. Aware of France's close links with Rwanda and the Hutu elite which was leading the genocide, the FCO expressed concerns that any French involvement would lead to the perpetrators of the genocide being given safe passage out of Rwanda or the government forces being given support in their war against the RPF as had happened previously (there is, however, no evidence that anyone in the government was aware that France actually continued to supply arms to the Rwandan government even after the genocide began). At the UN, British officials were therefore instructed to informally caution other Security Council members against the French mission but ultimately to vote in favour of Operation Turquoise if it looked to have general support.[28]

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[27] FCO telegram to UK Mission to the UN (New York), 'Rwanda: French Initiative', undated, but stamped 2 June 1994; released to the author under the Freedom of Information Act.

[28] FCO telegram to UK mission to the UN (New York), 21 June 1994; released to the author under the Freedom of Information Act.

Despite deep reservations, the FCO did recognise that with UNAMIR II still to deploy, blocking Operation Turquoise would have meant that the killing of Rwandan civilians would continue or that retaliatory attacks against ordinary Hutu would break out. FCO officials did believe that the French-led mission, although it was not ideal, had the potential to prevent some deaths. The FCO was also conscious that obstructing any sort of humanitarian mission, however ill-conceived they thought it, would not be well received by the media. Equally important in the decision to support Turquoise, however, appears to have been the fact that the FCO did not want to oppose any French proposal openly. France had tabled a motion and it was ultimately taken for granted that the United Kingdom would support its ally on the Security Council.[29]

The State Department, on the other hand, appears to have been very quiet about Operation Turquoise. Although information may yet be released, there is currently no publicly available evidence to suggest that the US government shared the British concerns. Madeleine Albright, for example, actively put pressure on non-permanent Security Council members to vote in favour of the resolution.[30] Albright is quoted as having told her colleagues 'The grave humanitarian crisis […] demands a swift response from the international community, and we commend the French for acting to address this need'.[31] Similarly, US Secretary of State Warren Christopher is recorded as having told the French Foreign Minister, Alain Juppé: 'Not only do I support you, I admire you'.[32] The American press was also supportive of the French intervention. *The Washington Post*, for example, suggested that 'the French should be congratulated'.[33] The Americans appear to have welcomed seeing someone else do something. Suddenly, any moral obligation for them to intervene was removed; the Clinton Administration had been let off the hook. The conviction that the French military could be trusted to look after itself also removed the Pentagon's fear of having to launch a rescue mission. So whilst the British held their council and let the French-led resolution pass so as to appease their European ally, the Clinton Administration breathed a sigh of relief.

The US response—official opposition to intervention

What is evident throughout the crisis is that although there were a few mid-level US officials who argued for some form of response, at a senior level, the Clinton administration actively took steps to avoid becoming involved. This is demonstrated by the internal debate on whether what was happening in Rwanda was genocide. As early as mid-April, the State Department's legal advisers were considering this question. Although they did eventually admit that 'acts of genocide' were happening, their advice in April was to avoid the use of the word 'genocide' as

[29] Interview with Malcolm RIFKIND, 22 March 2010.
[30] Daniela KROSLAK. *The Responsibility of External Bystanders in Cases of Genocide: The French in Rwanda, 1990-1994*, University of Wales: Aberystwyth, 2002, p. 343.
[31] Andrew GUMBEL, 'UN backs France as troops go into Rwanda in "humanitarian response" to atrocities', *The Guardian*, 23 June 1994, p. 28.
[32] Andrew GUMBEL, 'Paris claims support for Rwanda force', *The Guardian*, 21 June 1994, p. 21.
[33] Richard COHEN, 'A Moral Lesson from the French', *The Washington Post,* 23 June 1994, p. 29.

this could 'commit the [US government] to actually do something'.[34] Secretary of State Christopher finally authorised officials to use the word 'genocide' on 21 May, six weeks after the killing began.

Four main factors can explain why the United States was so hostile to any intervention. Firstly, the US response was dominated by the events in Somalia in late 1993. As Graham Allison has argued, '[t]he best explanation of an organisation's behaviour at *t* is *t-1*; the best prediction of what will happen at *t+1* is *t*'.[35] The White House, and Washington generally, looked to the recent experience of the United States in Somalia and decided that such a disaster could not to be repeated. As Darren Brunk has stated, 'Somalia was a dominant framing analogy for many policy-makers trying to form an impression of the violence in Rwanda'.[36] The death of the eighteen US Rangers and the subsequent withdrawal of US troops meant that any hope of US intervention in Rwanda was negligible. The events in Somalia led to an almost universal American backlash against the UN and peace-keeping—the UN had been used as the scapegoat for the US deaths, even though the mission in Somalia was US-initiated, US-led and US-resourced. The public, the press and the majority of Congress were no longer prepared to countenance involvement in another African civil war. This was especially the case in the Rwandan case, which to Americans seemed, like Somalia, to involve state failure and inter-tribal fighting. More than anywhere, this view dominated thinking at the Pentagon. As early as 11 April, internal Pentagon documents showed that the military were not willing to get involved until peace had been restored.[37] As National Security Adviser Tony Lake was to suggest subsequently, 'Rwanda was a casualty of chronology'.[38] Without the shadow of Somalia hanging over the United States, the response would perhaps have been different.

Secondly, Congress heavily influenced the US response. When the Clinton administration had taken office, it seemed better disposed toward peace-keeping than any other administration in US history. But by 1994, Congress had already made it clear that it did not support the rising cost of UN peace-keeping and that it felt the UN had to learn to say 'no'. Clinton was not inclined to approach a hostile, Republican-dominated Congress to ask for more funding for the UN, especially for Africa. Although there were a few politicians in Congress who called for greater US involvement, the majority were keen for the United States to keep out. For instance, after the evacuation of American nationals in early April, Republican leader in the Senate Bob Dole declared on the CBS news programme *Face the Nation*: 'I don't think we have any national interest here [...] I hope we don't get involved there. I

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[34] Discussion Paper, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence for Middle East/Africa Region, Department of Defense, 1 May 1994, <www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB53/rw050194.pdf> (accessed 12 June 2010).

[35] Graham T. ALLISON. *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1971, p. 88.

[36] Darren BRUNK, 'Curing the Somalia Syndrome: Analogy, Foreign Policy Decision-Making and the Rwandan Genocide', *Foreign Policy Analysis,* vol. 4, n° 3, 2008, p. 311.

[37] Memorandum from Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Middle East/Africa to Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, 'Talking Points on Rwanda/ Burundi', 11 April 1994, <www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB53> (accessed 12 June 2010).

[38] COHEN, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

don't think we will. The Americans are out, as far as I am concerned in Rwanda. That ought to be the end of it'.[39] Whilst Congress did not actively prevent US intervention, Clinton remained conscious of the need for Congressional support in order to push through his domestic policy, and was highly unlikely to be prepared to incur the hostility and wrath of Congress over Rwanda. As Leonie Murray suggests, Clinton did not believe involvement in UN missions was worthwhile enough to justify a fight in Washington.[40]

The third factor, Presidential Decision Directive 25 (PDD 25), was influenced by the first two. The administration was already reviewing future US involvement in, and support of, UN peace-keeping missions in 1993, but this review was radically influenced by the events in Somalia. Although not published until after the genocide had begun, PDD 25 was all but complete by April 1994 and was obviously at the fore of senior decision-makers' minds. The directive established that US support of UN missions would be conditional on the presence of set criteria, including: US national interests being at stake; a threat to world peace; a clear mission goal; acceptable costs; congressional, public and allied support; a working ceasefire; and a clear exit route. Rwanda failed all of these and passed only one of the criteria, evidence of a humanitarian emergency. In the absence of clear instructions to the contrary from the President, no senior government official was likely to champion intervention when it so clearly failed to satisfy the new policy.

The final factor was the fear in Washington that the United States was assumed to be the last resort peace-keeper. Having seen what had happened in Somalia, the administration feared that supporting any mission would ultimately, and inevitably, lead to US involvement, even if it was only to extract a failed mission from the land-locked country. The Pentagon had seen foreign troops at first-hand in Somalia and did not believe in the capability of African troops to mount a mission to Rwanda. The logic ran that if the Belgians had been forced to withdraw, what hope did African troops have? The United States was also aware that only the Americans had the necessary logistical resources to support such a mission; no other nation had the airlift capacity to transport troops and equipment to central Africa. It was for this reason that the United States opposed not only its own involvement, but also that of other nations.

The British response—official disinterest

Whilst the US response can be seen as an active desire to avoid involvement, largely driven by failure in Somalia, the British response is best summarized as lack of interest and knowledge. Somalia seems to have had much less significance for British decision-makers. The British response can instead be explained by five key factors: lack of interest, national or otherwise; the absence of information; the French government; a misinterpretation of the crisis; and political ideology.

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[39] Linda MELVERN, *A People Betrayed: The Role of the West in Rwanda's Genocide*, London: Zed Books, 2009 [2000], new updated edition, p. 172.
[40] Leonie MURRAY, *Clinton, Peace-keeping and Humanitarian Intervention,* London: Routledge, 2008, p. 87.

Historically, the United Kingdom had had very little involvement with Rwanda. Unlike the United States, the United Kingdom had not been involved in the Arusha process, had no embassy in Rwanda, and trade links were minimal.[41] In his Annual Review of 1994, the British High Commissioner in Kampala, Edward Clay, who was also non-resident Ambassador to Rwanda, wrote: 'Rwanda was the classic small country far away, of which we knew nothing and wished to know nothing'.[42] Nor was this dismissive attitude towards the small African country anything new. Britain's relations with, and interest in, Rwanda had variously been described by the FCO as 'minimal', 'tenuous' and 'insignificant'.[43] In 1975, the then non-resident Ambassador had been criticised for showing too much interest in the country. The FCO response to his annual report stated: 'Considering the peripheral nature of our interests in Rwanda [the Annual Review] is far too long'—that year the review ran to less than 1,500 words.[44]

As a Francophone country, Rwanda was a low priority in a continent that was itself considered a low priority. Throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, the FCO had reduced staffing levels across Africa, and the number of Africanists had been reduced—at the UK mission to the UN, just one member of staff was responsible for all African issues. If the attention paid to Africa was minimal, the attention focused on Francophone Africa was even less. For instance, the United Kingdom's bilateral aid figures show that whilst Commonwealth countries in Africa received an average £4.24 per capita in bilateral aid in 1991, Francophone countries averaged only £0.10 per head.[45] The consequence of this was that the United Kingdom had paid very little attention to developments in Rwanda from 1990 onwards. There was no British observer at the Arusha peace talks. When the genocide did begin, British understanding of the history of the violence and what was happening on the ground was minimal.

In terms of the second factor, absence of information, it is clear that the very limited intelligence the FCO had on Rwanda did not reach the top levels of government. Despite suggestions by Wayne Madsen and Hazel Cameron to the contrary, there is no credible evidence that the British intelligence community showed any interest in Rwanda before, or even once, the genocide broke out.[46] Instead, official intelligence seems to have been limited to a report written by Edward Clay following his one and only visit to the country before the genocide began. Britain's lack of intelligence on Rwanda is perhaps best demonstrated by the

[41] In 1993, UK imports from Rwanda were only £1.9m and exports were £3.3m (Overseas Trade Statistics, HM Customs & Excise).
[42] FCO, African Department, Rwanda Annual Review 1994, 11 January 1995; released to the author under the Freedom of Information Act.
[43] The National Archives (TNA), FO 371/181953, Foreign Office note, 1 April 1965; FCO 31/291, FCO Annual Review 1968; FCO 31/1801, Briefing note to Secretary of State, April 1974.
[44] TNA, FCO 31/1980, Internal FCO memorandum, 18 March 1975.
[45] Hansard, series 6, vol. 219, House of Commons, Written Answers, Overseas Development, 15 February 1993.
[46] Hazel CAMERON, 'British State Complicity in Genocide: Rwanda 1994', *State Crime,* vol. 1, n° 1, 2012, pp. 78-80; Wayne MADSEN, *Genocide and Covert Operations in Africa 1993-1999*, Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 1999.

fact that during that visit, Clay, failing to find any map of the country, was 'dependent on photocopies of the relevant page of *The Lonely Planet* guide to East Africa'.[47] The FCO therefore seems to have depended on open source intelligence. Back in London, Douglas Hurd is alleged to have been briefed on the genocide by officials whose only source of information was CNN.[48] Whilst Baroness Chalker, the Minister for Overseas Development at the time, dismisses this claim as an 'exaggeration', she agrees that the government had limited knowledge of Rwanda, calling it a 'territory with which we had very little connection'.[49] The lack of first-hand intelligence on the country was compounded by the fact that British media coverage of events in Rwanda was relatively scant. Editors seem to have made the decision that events in Bosnia and South Africa, where Nelson Mandela was elected the first black President, were more important. Politicians looking to the British press for a reliable analysis of what was happening in Rwanda would, unfortunately, be poorly served. As David Hannay has said, the United Kingdom was 'extremely unsighted' over Rwanda.[50]

This absence of information led the British to look to Belgium and France for guidance. As the old colonial power and the new great-power sponsor in Rwanda, these two countries were seen by the FCO as having responsibility for Rwanda. Yet whilst, as noted above, the FCO was aware of France's historical links with the regime which was perpetrating genocide, one FCO official has said: 'We [still] tended to believe what the French were telling us'.[51] Malcolm Rifkind, the Secretary of State for Defence in 1994, concurs, suggesting that given Rwanda's history, the British government 'would naturally look to [the French] for a lead'.[52] Although records of any correspondence remain restricted, it is evident from FCO documents already released under Freedom of Information that throughout the crisis there was contact between London and Paris.

This reliance on France and Belgium leads to the third factor influencing the British response: Britain's support for UNAMIR and Operating Turquoise, although tentative, came about largely as a result of French pressure. There are two reasons why such support would be given. First, France was the United Kingdom's ally in Europe and in the peace-keeping mission in Bosnia. Placing the debates on Turquoise into context, it can be seen that just two days after the vote, European leaders would be meeting in Corfu to agree on the next President of the European Commission. Knowing that John Major and Mitterrand disagreed vehemently over the nominees, it is almost unimaginable that the British would do anything to further jeopardise Anglo-French relations. Secondly, the French and Canadian governments were privately accusing the British of supporting the RPF rebels. Mitterrand, in particular, believed, apparently solely on the basis that the RPF were based in Uganda where the British, for historical reasons, had strong links, that the RPF

[47] Report from Edward Clay to FCO, London (undated); released to the author under the Freedom of Information Act.
[48] DOWDEN, *op. cit.*, p. 236.
[49] Interview with Baroness CHALKER, 18 August 2010.
[50] Interview with David HANNAY, 23 April 2010.
[51] MELVERN, *A People Betrayed,* p. 271.
[52] Interview with Malcolm RIFKIND, 22 March 2010.

supported by Uganda were part of what Asteris Huliaras describes as an 'Anglo-Saxon plot to eject France from Africa'.[53] Because of this, Rwanda did have some importance for the United Kingdom: the crisis had the potential to spark diplomatic problems with France. It could therefore be suggested that in some ways, this made Rwanda not an African problem for the British government, but actually a European one.

A second consequence of the lack of information, leads to the fourth factor: the misinterpretation of the crisis. Whilst US lawyers debated whether the events in Rwanda constituted genocide almost as soon as the violence began, there is no evidence of similar discussions in the United Kingdom. The reason for this seems to be that the crisis, until late May, was genuinely seen as renewed civil war: there was therefore no reason to consider whether it was genocide. Clay reported increased levels of violence in February, but this was presented as the inevitable breakdown of the peace talks and evidence of the imminent resumption of civil war. The fact that both the French and Belgian governments continued to describe the crisis throughout as civil war only added to this interpretation. In the United Kingdom, the Prime Minister therefore talked of a 'bitter civil war' as late as 17 May.[54] Repeatedly, FCO ministers indicated that the only way to end the crisis was through a return to the negotiating table. This misinterpretation of events also dominated the British press, which, falling back on racial stereotypes, described the crisis throughout as being an ethnically or a tribally motivated war. The initial response of the press was therefore to describe the violence in Kigali as 'random',[55] a form of 'anarchy'[56] or 'chaos'.[57] As late as 21 May, *The Economist* was still calling events in Rwanda a 'civil war'.[58] Certainly until late May, British policy-makers, with limited evidence to the contrary, seem to have misinterpreted the events in Rwanda. Instead of seeing genocide, they saw civil war and African savagery.

Finally, the British response was also heavily influenced by the personality and ideology of key decision-makers. Despite having been previously (albeit briefly) Foreign Secretary, John Major appears to have been happy to leave foreign policy to others (with the obvious exception of Europe, which was to prove the defining issue of his time in Downing Street). One minister close to the senior levels of government suggested that he would be 'extremely surprised' if the Prime Minister had paid much attention to Rwanda: 'he would have assumed that Douglas [Hurd] was dealing with it'.[59] Baroness Chalker, the minister closest to the events in Rwanda, recalls once having a brief, private discussion with Major about the crisis, but continues that there was no great pressure from him to do more.[60] With no pressure being exerted by Major, who at the time was personally leading the

[53] Asteris HULIARAS, 'The "Anglo-Saxon Conspiracy": French Perceptions of the Great Lakes Crisis', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol. 36, n° 4, 1998, p. 594.
[54] Hansard, House of Commons Debate, series 6, vol. 243, c. 672.
[55] S. LAMBERT, 'Rwandan pillaging and killing out of control', *The Independent,* 9 April 1994, p. 10.
[56] J. LANDALE, 'Foreigners wait for rescue from Rwandan ordeal', *The Times,* 9 April 1994.
[57] Anon., 'Thousands die in orgy of bloodletting', *The Daily Mail,* 9 April 1994, p. 12.
[58] Anon., 'Saving Rwandan Lives', *The Economist,* 21 May 1994.
[59] Interview, 10 July 2009.
[60] Interview with Baroness CHALKER, 18 August 2010.

Conservative Party campaign for the local authority elections, it seems that no-one in government championed intervention. Added to this is the fact that neither of the two Cabinet ministers with a direct interest in foreign issues, Douglas Hurd at the FCO and Malcolm Rifkind at the MOD, was naturally inclined to support intervention. Rifkind, for example, has said that he views all intervention with suspicion, seeing intervention generally as doing more harm than good.[61] In his memoirs, Hurd also recalls the difficulty he and Major had in obtaining Cabinet support for British involvement in Bosnia. He writes: 'My colleagues in government and all parties in the Commons were, with individual exceptions, sceptical of the need for even the limited intervention we undertook'.[62] For the Conservative Cabinet, intervention to stop genocide in Africa simply did not meet the national-interest test that dominated their realist view of foreign policy.

Conclusion

Although *prima facie* the British and American response to the genocide was similar—passivity—there are significant differences behind the failure to intervene. In the United States, the failure to respond was certainly deliberate and was heavily influenced by the events in Somalia. For the United Kingdom, there is less evidence of deliberate non-intervention and opposition. There was certainly caution at the rising expense of UN peace-keeping and the risks involved in a mission to Rwanda. But it appears that at senior levels, the United Kingdom simply had no interest in Rwanda. The United States could not honestly say this: the Americans had an embassy in Kigali, had clear intelligence about the country and had been heavily involved in the Arusha peace process—they had committed to the country and turned their back only when they feared the involvement of their own troops. So whilst neither country rushed to the aid of Rwanda, the United States acted consciously and deliberately, whilst the United Kingdom's response appears to have been characterized by ignorance, indifference and a general hostility towards intervention.

Finally, there is little evidence that Kissinger and Curtis were right this time. The United Kingdom did not act as an arm of the Clinton administration. The United Kingdom argued in favour of retaining a small force in Rwanda despite US demands for a full withdrawal; the United Kingdom opposed the United States 'outside-in' mission; and the United Kingdom actively sought an African response to the genocide whilst the United States continued to stall. If anything, the British acted to influence the Americans. What can be seen is that rather than being influenced by the United States, the British government was actually more conscious of appeasing the French government. In 1994, the United Kingdom seems to have been more willing to support its European partners than its ally across the Atlantic.

[61] Interview with Malcolm RIFKIND, 22 March 2010.
[62] HURD, *op. cit.*, p. 492.

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The United Kingdom over the Lomé Years: A Constructive Partner in Europe?

Gordon D. CUMMING
University of Cardiff

Not long after joining the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1973, Britain came to be regarded by other member states as 'an awkward partner' and 'a semi-detached member of the Community'.[1] The British felt particularly aggrieved that their voices were not being heard on issues such as the British budget rebate and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). They complained in more measured tones about their lack of influence over the EEC's 'haphazard' and 'diffuse' aid programmes.[2] Yet how justified were the British in harbouring such grievances in relation to European development assistance? Did Britain simply have to fall into line with the demands of its European aid partners or did it enjoy discreet but discernible influence over EEC assistance? This question of reciprocal influence has not been properly addressed in the literature. Only a handful of commentators touch upon Britain's role in shaping European aid and most suggest that the United Kingdom had little or no influence. Cosgrove Twitchett argues that, during the negotiations on Lomé I (Europe's first aid and trade agreement with former African, Caribbean and Pacific colonies), the United Kingdom was 'temperamentally less interested in promoting an accommodation between her former colonies and the EEC than had been the case during the 1960s', when Britain first applied to the EEC.[3] Hewitt also plays down British influence, suggesting that, despite a doubling of British aid through the EEC, Britain's 'levels of political clout were stagnating' between 1979 and 1990.[4] A notable exception comes in the form of a thinkpiece by the then British Overseas Development Minister Lynda Chalker. Unsurprisingly perhaps, this offers a more positive assessment of the United Kingdom's ability to shape European development policy.

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[1] Stephen GEORGE, *An Awkward Partner: Britain in the European Community*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998, p. 1 and p. 244. For George, 'awkward' simply means 'difficult to deal with' whereas for Buller it refers to a deliberate 'obstructive' approach by UK negotiators; see Jim BULLER, 'Britain as an Awkward Partner', *Politics*, vol. 15, 1995, pp. 33-42.

[2] Comments by UK Foreign Secretary, Douglas Hurd, cited in *The Independent*, 16 February 1995.

[3] Carol COSGROVE TWITCHETT, *Europe and Africa*, Farnborough: Saxon House, 1987, p. 169.

[4] Adrian HEWITT, 'Britain and the European Development Fund', in Anuradha BOSE & Peter BURNELL (eds.), *Britain's Overseas Aid since 1979*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991, p. 86.

It also implicitly rules out the possibility that British aid policy was ever influenced by the European Commission.[5]

The issue of reciprocal influences is clearly pivotal, as it can provide an original perspective on why the United Kingdom has retained a reputation for awkwardness on some European issues and not others. It is central to this article which begins by showing how the United Kingdom was broadly receptive to European Commission influence on aid matters over the Lomé decades. Next, it evaluates British influence on European development assistance over three time periods: 1973-1979 (Lomé I and the negotiations preceding it), 1980-89 (Lomés II and III) and 1990-1999 (Lomé IV). Drawing on semi-structured interviews with key officials in the European Commission and the United Kingdom's former aid administration, the Overseas Development Administration (ODA), this study then highlights the factors which enabled and constrained British influence. Finally, it asks whether Britain's continued awkwardness in Europe might be traced back to its early experiences of European development assistance.

Before proceeding, it is worth noting the following caveats. First, the terms European Economic Community and European Union (EU) are used respectively to refer to the pre- and post-1992 periods. Second, the emphasis is on reciprocal influences involving the United Kingdom and European Commission rather than the United Kingdom and individual member states. Third, the focus is on European development assistance, as opposed to humanitarian aid or trade preferences. Finally, it should be noted that influence is hard to prove in the context of European aid where decisions are usually made behind closed doors.

Winning over the British?

Notwithstanding the above, it is possible to identify several ways in which UK aid was influenced by the European Commission in these years. First of all, the Commission helped pave the way for Britain and some of its Commonwealth partners to enter into the Lomé agreement. It did so through the work of key policy-makers and through policy memorandums. Two of the Commission's most influential figures were, as from 1973, the Development Commissioner, Claude Cheysson, and Deputy Director-General of the Development Directorate (DG VIII), Maurice Foley. Cheysson was a progressive and imaginative negotiator, who was instrumental in breaking the deadlock between francophone states, which sought to maintain reciprocal trade preferences, and the anglophone bloc, which wanted non-reciprocity.[6] For his role in facilitating Commonwealth accession to Lomé, this French politician was described by Hewitt and Whiteman

[5] Lynda CHALKER, 'The UK's View of the Future of European Development Cooperation', in Marjorie LISTER (ed.), *European Union Development Policy*, Houndmills: Palgrave, 1998, pp. 1-4.

[6] Lotte DRIEGHE & Jan ORBIE, 'Revolution in Times of Eurosclerosis', *L'Europe en formation*, n° 353-354, 2009, p. 179.

as French President Pompidou's 'gift to the British'.[7] As for Foley, this former British Foreign Office Minister and trade unionist used his personal links with anglophone African leaders to allay both their suspicions of a francophone-led European Commission and their concerns over the loss of Commonwealth preferences. He also played a decisive role in bringing Caribbean and Pacific nations into Lomé and in ensuring they did not become 'the orphans of Britain's rush into Europe'.[8]

Turning to policy memorandums, the Commission used these documents to frame the debate over the content of Lomé I and the terms of Britain's accession to it. In its 1971 memorandum to the Council of Ministers,[9] the Commission stressed that the Yaoundé Convention no longer corresponded to the developmental ambitions of the EEC and that there was a need to extend the policy of association and trade cooperation to other developing countries. In so doing, the Commission prepared the ground for the October 1972 summit in Paris, which brought together member and accession states and which resolved much of the disagreement between those states, led by France, which favoured a regional approach, and those, such as Germany and Holland, which sought a global development policy.[10] In its 1972 memorandum, the Commission stressed that, while the advantages of association should be preserved,[11] European assistance should be extended beyond former colonies. Then, in 1973, the Commission produced a memorandum which recommended opening up the advantages of Yaoundé and undertaking negotiations with the 20 Commonwealth countries (subsequently extended to 22) listed on the protocol attached to the United Kingdom's Accession Treaty.[12]

In facilitating the United Kingdom's accession to Lomé, the Commisssion also helped to ensure that London accepted the implications of joining the European club. In particular, it secured the United Kingdom's acquiescence in the fact that the Commission was, *de facto* if not *de jure*, 'in the lead on initiatives'.[13] Over time, the Commission even persuaded the United Kingdom and other member states to go along with the need for 'a common policy framework which would be politically

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[7] Adrian HEWITT & Kaye WHITEMAN, 'The Commission and Development Policy' in Karin ARTS & Anna DICKSON (eds.), *EU Development Cooperation*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004, p. 140.
[8] *The Guardian*, 23 February 2002.
[9] EUROPEAN COMMISSION, 'Mémorandum de la Commission sur une politique communautaire de coopération au développement', *Bull. EC*, suppl. 4/71, Brussels, 1971.
[10] Dieter FRISCH, *La politique de développement de l'Union européenne*, Maastricht: ECPDM, 1998, p. 8.
[11] EUROPEAN COMMISSION, *Mémorandum sur une politique communautaire de développement*, Brussels: DG Relations Extérieures, 1972.
[12] EUROPEAN COMMISSION, 'Memorandum of the Commission to the Council on the Future Relations between the Community, the Present AASM States', *Bull. EC*, 1/73, Brussels, 1973.
[13] Interview with Dieter FRISCH, Director General of the European Commission's Directorate General VIII (1982-93), Brussels, 2011.

binding not only on the Commission but also on member countries'.[14] Importantly too, the Commission was able to ensure that Britain, right up to the mid-1990s, increased its contributions to successive European Development Funds (EDF) and hence to ACP countries under successive Lomé Conventions (see Table 1). The Commission also engineered, over many years major increases, in the EEC's aid budget as a whole and saw total British aid to the EEC increase from 6 per cent in 1978 to 12 per cent in 1979 and nearly 20 per cent in 1990.[15]

The Commission could equally claim to have had an impact on British development policy. Spurred on by Maurice Foley and with support from the EEC-ACP Parliamentary Association, the Commission pushed for the creation of a Southern African Development Community (SADC) and for a radicalisation of Europe's policy towards southern Africa.[16] In so doing, it kept up pressure, during the 1970s and 1980s, on British governments to take a robust stance towards the white minority regime in South Africa.[17] It also played a key role in the early 1990s in coordinating the positions of the United Kingdom and other member states on political conditionality, a controversial policy of linking aid to political reform in developing countries. The fact that Europe's humanitarian arm, ECHO, ruled out any suspension of emergency assistance, also facilitated the halting of development aid, as the United Kingdom and other bilateral donors knew that humanitarian assistance would continue to flow to those most in need.[18]

Finally, the Commission enjoyed influence through information exchanges. It had knowledge, expertise and contacts to offer, notably in parts of the world such as francophone Africa where Britain was under-represented and had little local knowledge. According to a former Acting Director of DGVIII, Peter Pooley, the British 'did accept they might have something to learn from the Commission outside their own sphere of influence'.[19] Michael Lake, former Head of the EEC Delegation in South Africa, echoed this view, noting how 'in francophone African countries, the UK Ambassador was the Commission's best friend', as he or she would be looking for ways of tapping into 'the EC's [European Community's] wide network of ministerial and other contacts'. [20]

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[14] *Idem*. This framework came into being with the 1992 Maastricht Treaty, which imposed a legal obligation on member states to harmonise aid policies, and the 2007 Lisbon Treaty, which called for greater complementarity at the European level.
[15] HEWITT, *op. cit.*, p. 86. This overall rise was, however, not a matter of choice as British contributions to the EEC budget for non-ACP countries were determined by the size of Britain's Gross National Product and voted on by the European Parliament.
[16] HEWITT & WHITEMAN, *op. cit.*, p. 142.
[17] ARTS & DICKSON, *op. cit.*, pp. 142-43.
[18] Interview with M. LAKE, Brussels, 2011.
[19] Interview with P. POOLEY, Aylesbury, 2011.
[20] Interview with M. LAKE, Brussels, 2011.

Table 1: European Development Fund (EDF): Signatories and Key Contributors (1959-2000)

	Signatories EEC	ACP	France	FRG* / Germany	UK	EEC Total
EDF 1 1959-64 (Rome Treaty Association)	6	18	34.4%	34.4%	-	100 % (581 m ECU)
EDF 2 1964-70 (Yaoundé I)	6	18	33.8%	33.8%	-	100% (730 m ECU)
EDF 3 1970-75 (Yaoundé II)	6	19	33.2%	33.2%	-	100% (900 m ECU)
EDF 4 1975-80 (Lomé I)	9	46	26.0 %	26.0%	18.7%	100 % (3.1 bn ECU)
EDF 5 1980-85 (Lomé II)	10	57	25.6%	28.3 %	18.0%	100% (4.7 bn ECU)
EDF 6 1985-90 (Lomé III)	12	66	23.6%	26.1%	16.6%	100 % (7.4 bn ECU)
EDF 7 1990-95 (Lomé IV)	12	69	24.3%	25.9%	16.4%	100% (10.8 bn ECU)
EDF 8 1995-2000 (Lomé IV)	15	70	24.3%	23.4%	12.7%	100 (13.0 bn ECU)

Sources: C. COSGROVE TWITCHETT, *op. cit.*, p. 118, p. 143, p. 169; DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE, European Community, Paris: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 1998, p. 86; OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE *(ODI)*, Lomé II, Briefing paper no. 1, February 1980, p. 6; Charlotte BRETHERTON & John VOGLER, *The European Union as a Global Actor*, London: Routledge, 2006, p. 116. Contributions are quoted in millions or billions of European Currency Units (ECU), the accounting units used for the Community's internal budget.
* Federal Republic of Germany

To sum up, the Commission had influence where it had something to offer (such as information, networks), where Britain was in a weaker position (as at the moment of accession) or where the United Kingdom preferred not to go it alone (as with aid sanctions). In line with institutionalist and path-dependency thinking, the Commission's influence increased over time as it grew in self-confidence, became more resilient as a policy entrepreneur and refused to act as a repository for the aid policies of any one dominant member state.

Against this, some commentators question the degree of Commission influence. Lottie and Orbie argue that, in the case of Lomé I, France and the United Kingdom 'largely shaped the content and nature of the agreement through intergovernmental bargaining', while the Commission failed to pursue 'an agenda of its own' and only played 'a more important role in the subsequent Lomé

Conventions and in the recent Cotonou Agreement'.[21] In a similar inter-governmentalist vein, Crawford shows how, at the time of the 1995 Mid-Term Review (MTR) of Lomé, the United Kingdom drew a line in the sand regarding its aid contribution. Karin and Dickson likewise suggest that Britain, together with other member states, was instrumental in keeping the EDF outside of the rapidly expanding European Community budget, thereby ensuring that Lomé funding was the subject of inter-governmental bargaining every five years.[22]

Commission officials interviewed for this study were also wary of claiming influence. As Dieter Frisch admitted, 'it was certainly more the member countries that tried to influence what the Community did than the other way round'.[23] Peter Pooley was even more cautious, noting that where the British had 'unparalled networks', in places like 'East Africa and in the Caribbean, they thought that they knew how to do things and nobody else did, not only the Commission but anyone else'.[24] It was certainly the case, moreover, that British politicians in parliamentary debates gave little indication that they were listening to the Commission. They criticised EEC aid for being slow, ineffective, poorly controlled and evaluated. They also viewed it as overly bureaucratic, formulaic and over-concentrated on contractual questions rather than substance. For British policy-makers, the Lomé Convention did not, as promised in its preamble, lay down 'a model of relations between developed and developing states'. Instead, the United Kingdom looked for ideas on overseas development to the US-led World Bank and the OECD.[25]

Britain's influence on the Commission

First Phase: 1973-79

The first period (1973-79) corresponds to the negotiating phase through to the end of the first Lomé Convention, signed by nine European member states and 46 ACP countries. Claude Cheysson was Development Commissioner (1973–1981) and a Labour government (Harold Wilson 1974-76, James Callaghan, 1976-79) was in power. The crucial way in which the United Kingdom exerted influence was in providing the opportunity for the expansion of the Yaoundé Convention into a much broader framework. Prior to Lomé I, Europe was divided over the future of Yaoundé. France, with francophone African backing, was pushing for the continuation of a regional policy of association, whereas 'the view of a number of key member states, notably Germany and Holland was that Yaoundé could not be continued in its existing form and should be replaced' by a global approach.[26] Though wary of a diffuse approach that would spread Europe's then limited aid budget too thinly, the Commission did want a convention that was commensurate with Europe's growing size and ambitions. It was seeking a new approach, and the United Kingdom's entry opened the door to a more dynamic partnership. According

[21] DRIEGHE & ORBIE, *op. cit.,* pp. 173, 179.
[22] ARTS & DICKSON, *op. cit.*, p. 125.
[23] Interview with D. FRISCH.
[24] Interview with P. POOLEY.
[25] Interview with Tom GLASER, ex-Head of EU Representation in Budapest, Cardiff, 2011.
[26] Interview with D. FRISCH.

to Dieter Frisch, the trebling of the size of the financial envelope between Yaoundé II and Lomé I (see Table 1) would

> *not have been possible without Britain's entry. With all the push we could have produced, with the support of the Germans, the Dutch […] it would not have sufficed. So the fact that Britain joined […] certainly helped us enormously to open up to Lomé. I don't think that Lomé would have been what it became without British entry.*[27]

It was also thanks to the United Kingdom's accession to the EEC that so many Commonwealth countries were able to sign up to Lomé. In so doing, they changed permanently the dynamics of ACP-EEC negotiations. Anglophone African countries brought a 'more forthright […] political outlook', with Nigeria in particular contributing 'political and technical skill as well as impetus for united action'.[28] The six Caribbean Commonwealth countries provided a 'dynamic […] team of experienced negotiators [whose] […] tactics proved to be an eye-opener, especially for the more deferential francophone Africans'.[29] The new members built upon the Yaoundé Associates' familiarity with EEC bureaucracy and helped forge united positions, particularly after the ACP formally constituted itself via the Georgetown Agreement of June 1975.

Crucially too, the United Kingdom's application to the EEC paved the way for substantive changes to the original Yaoundé Convention. One such shift was the move away from reciprocal to non-reciprocal preferences, as Commonwealth countries, with the backing of Britain, Ireland, the Netherlands and eventually Germany, rejected the francophone bloc's demand that reciprocal preferences be maintained. Another innovation was the introduction by the Commission of STABEX, a European system for stabilising export earnings from agricultural commodities, which was introduced largely in response to the concerns of Commonwealth sugar producers. At the operational level too, the United Kingdom enjoyed some influence over European development assistance. This was particularly true in the field in former colonies where British officials were 'present in greater numbers' and where the United Kingdom was often 'the lead country', as in Kenya.[30]

Overall, however, it would be wrong to overstate Britain's role in shaping Lomé I. As Hewitt suggests, the improvement in the terms of Lomé over Yaoundé 'was at least as much a result of hard bargaining by ACP countries—notably Jamaica, Guyana and Nigeria, supported by the power which they derived from temporary world commodity shortages (petroleum and sugar particularly)—as of British patronage and far sightedness'.[31] Cosgrove Twitchett notes, moreover, that 'the Lomé negotiations took place while the United Kingdom was in the throes of

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[27] Idem.
[28] Isebill GRUHN, 'The Lomé Convention: Inching Towards Interdependence', *International Organization*, vol. 30, n° 2, 1976, p. 254.
[29] Idem.
[30] Interview with P. POOLEY.
[31] HEWITT, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

renegotiation and the ensuing referendum debate on whether she should herself remain a member of the EC'. It was against this backdrop and in a context of domestic economic woes that the United Kingdom argued only half-heartedly for the inclusion in Lomé of the Asian Commonwealth, adopted a confused negotiating stance on sugar import prices and failed to match the French or German contribution to the Convention.[32] Britain could not even claim to have held sway over the thinking behind the new Convention. Its real architect was Cheysson, a skilled statesman and former French diplomat with a background on African issues, who moved Europe away from its earlier 'benevolent paternalism' and encouraged greater ownership, telling the ACP 'It's your money. […] We are here to provide technical advice if you need it'.[33] It follows that upon signing up to Lomé, 'Britain found a set of policies, established positions and sitting tenants in positions of power (at both the delivering and receiving ends of the aid process) with which it had little sympathy'.[34]

Second Phase: 1980-89

This second period focuses on Lomé II (1980-85) and Lomé III (1985-90). It also corresponds roughly to the time in office of Development Commissioners Edgar Pisani (1981-85) and Lorenzo Natali (1985-91) as well as the premiership of the British Conservative Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (1979-90).

Despite their anti-Brussels rhetoric, successive Thatcher governments played a broadly positive role towards the Lomé Convention. As Dieter Frisch told the author, 'the choice the British made […] was that if they had to accept that Brussels now managed more and more money, the best thing was to influence that as much as possible in a positive sense. They were not slowing it down or blocking it or creating problems'.[35] In line with this logic, the United Kingdom went along with a further significant rise in the EDF financial envelope: from 3.1 billion ECU for Lomé I to 7.4 billion ECU for Lomé III (see Table 1). The British remained engaged and began planting ideas that would later come to fruition. To illustrate, the United Kingdom's Labour Foreign Secretary, David Owen, suggested during the Lomé II negotiations that the benefits of this Convention be conditional upon respect for human rights in recipient countries.[36] Another issue on which the United Kingdom began voicing concern was the need to improve the effectiveness of European aid by making it less project-focused and more tied to World Bank structural adjustment reforms. Britain also pushed for tighter controls to ensure that STABEX should be used for its intended purpose, namely compensating peasant farmers for commodity price drops. A United Kingdom White Paper even concluded that the EEC should disband

[32] In the interest of British consumers, Britain called for lower sugar prices while proclaiming its commitment to the Commonwealth's development.
[33] Cited in FRISCH, *op. cit.*, p. 12.
[34] HEWITT, *op. cit*., p. 88.
[35] Interview with D. FRISCH.
[36] David WALL, 'Britain, the EEC and the Third World', in Roy JENKINS (ed.), *Britain and the EEC*, Houndmills: Macmillan, 1983, p. 190.

STABEX and contribute instead to the global compensatory scheme run by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).[37]

The above ideas did not, however, bear fruit in the early 1980s. While the United Kingdom enjoyed support from the Dutch and, as from 1983, the European Parliament, for human rights conditionality, this idea was sidelined in Lomé II due to determined protests by the ACP and opposition from some EEC member states which wanted the Convention to remain 'politically neutral'.[38] Britain's demands for greater aid effectiveness also made little headway. Indeed, Lomé II continued to focus almost entirely on projects, eschewed World-Bank style economic programmes, extended STABEX to more than ten new products and actually set up a parallel scheme for mineral price support, SYSMIN.[39]

It was not until Lomé III that a number of these British-backed ideas found their way into the EEC's approach to aid. Lomé III picked up on British demands on human rights and wrote this concept into the texts that formed 'part of the Lomé contract' and that might 'therefore be invoked in the most flagrant cases in which elementary human rights are abused'.[40] Lomé III also reflected Britain's growing concern over aid effectiveness. Thus, 'policy dialogue' was introduced as a way of moving away from a project-oriented to a programme-based approach involving mutual commitments by the EEC and the ACP in sectors where ACP countries had already agreed a structural or sectoral adjustment loan with the World Bank.

The United Kingdom's efforts to improve the efficiency of EEC aid were not of course confined to the EDF framework. Thus, Britain in the mid-1980s lobbied for reform of EEC emergency food aid and British Development Minister Chris Patten was quick to claim the credit for 'pushing the Commission away from classic short-term emergency aid towards making emergency aid a developmental instrument'.[41]

It would, however, be mistaken to overstate the United Kingdom's influence on Lomé III. The fact is that the shift towards policy dialogue was largely the brainchild of French Development Commissioner, Edgar Pisani, whose 1982 memorandum stressed the need to move away from Cheysson's earlier logic and introduce a mature approach to EEC-ACP discussions.[42] The United Kingdom had little input here. Indeed, 'the British, in the Council of Ministers, found it difficult to know why the Commission was attaching so much importance to it. It wasn't part of Lomé which was cut and dried'.[43] In addition, Britain's success in pushing for closer

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[37] Christopher ERSWELL, *UK Aid Policy and Practice 1974-90*, Florida: Universal-Publishers, 2001, p. 66.
[38] D. FRISCH, *op. cit.*, p. 20.
[39] Hassan SELIM, *Development Assistance Policies and the Performance of Aid Agencies*, Houndmills: Macmillan, 1983, p. 178; HEWITT, *op. cit.*, p. 88.
[40] Baroness YOUNG, House of Lords Debate, 1 July 1985, vol. 465, col. 1008.
[41] Interview with ex-official, Aid Policy Department, ODA, 2011.
[42] EUROPEAN COMMISSION, 'Memorandum on the Community's Development Policy', 15 *Bull. EC* suppl. 5, 1982.
[43] Interview with M. LAKE.

linkages between EEC aid and World Bank neoliberal programmes was at best partial. Thus, while the Commission did eventually sign up to the adjustment process and set up a structural adjustment facility (SAF) in 1987, it also sought to remain the *compagnon de route* of the developing world and rejected the hard-line stance on economic reform pushed by the United Kingdom. Finally, even the British government's claims that it brought about changes to European food aid policies have to be qualified, given that the Commission had already begun work on these reforms before Chris Patten spoke out on this issue.[44]

Third Phase: 1990-2000

This phase covers Lomé IV, the first ten-year Convention. During the first tranche and the MTR for the second, Manuel Marin was European Development Commissioner (1989-95) and John Major was UK Prime Minister (1990-97). In the early 1990s, the United Kingdom remained constructive, approving an overall increase in the EDF budget of 12 million ECU (two million more than the British government had wanted)[45] and accepting a rise in STABEX funding (to ECU 1.5 billion), despite 'British distaste for a fund that stabilises export earnings without encouraging diversification'.[46] The United Kingdom also adopted a 'helpful' approach in the field, where they 'tried to get things to work efficiently', providing instant funding for feasibility studies and thereby 'giving the Commission time to get its paperwork in order'.[47] In Brussels too, Britain acted in 'a positive fashion' by seconding specialists on education and forestry, where the Commission lacked expertise.[48] The British, equally, offered advice to the Commission on aid evaluation and planning methods, thereby facilitating the introduction of an integrated approach to project cycle management (which uses the logical framework), a project information control system, an expansion of the Commission's Evaluation Department, and the launch of joint evaluations of EEC aid programmes to ACP and non-ACP countries.[49] At the same time, the United Kingdom continued pushing for tighter aid coordination in the field and led the way by sponsoring the Horizon 2000 pilot scheme during its 1992 Presidency of Europe.[50]

By adopting a positive approach, the United Kingdom was better able to push one of its longstanding concerns, human rights conditionality, which was approved by the European Council in a Resolution in May 1991. The British government also managed to move the EEC a step closer to accepting World Bank programmes. As Hewitt makes clear:

> *It was only […] with […] the fourth Lomé Convention […], that the EEC conceded that structural adjustment policy reform obligations were a reality. The Commission belatedly recognised that it could not*

[44] Idem.
[45] Ann CLYWD, House of Commons Debate, 26 February 1991, vol. 186, col. 937.
[46] *European Report*, 13 June 1990.
[47] Interview with Ian BOAG, Former Head of four Commission delegations, Brussels, 2011.
[48] Interview with D. FRISCH.
[49] Baroness CHALKER, House of Lords Debate, 13 December 1993, vol. 550, col. 1169.
[50] Lynda CHALKER, 'The UK's View …', *op. cit.*, p. 1.

> *continue to operate a project aid system which allowed governments to bypass reform conditions which were being imposed by the EEC member states' own governments.*[51]

The United Kingdom encouraged the Commission down this road by seconding an economist to DG VIII to advise on structural adjustment. Britain also welcomed the Commission's decision to increase staff in the unit dealing with the SAF to 12 economists and to expand the value of this quick disbursing facility from 2.8 per cent of programmable aid in 1991 to over 25 per cent in 1994.[52]

Again, however, it would be misleading to exaggerate British influence. Thus, while the United Kingdom's provision of specialist expertise did give it a voice 'on the inside', any actual influence on the Commission was curtailed by the frequency of complaints from other member states about the irregularity of such secondments. Furthermore, the United Kingdom never fully persuaded the Commission of the merits of structural adjustment. Thus, while the British had called for a major shift towards SAF funding, they ended up accepting a compromise whereby a special fund was set aside for recipients pursuing structural adjustment programmes whilst other ACP states continued to benefit from pre-allocated programmable aid under National Indicative Plans. In other words, the Commission refused 'to go the way that the British wanted, which was to be in the forefront of conditionality'.[53]

The United Kingdom's negotiating position began hardening as early as the 1992 Edinburgh summit when the EEC pledged to increase by 60 per cent over the next seven years its spending on external action, particularly in Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean.[54] Given the decline in the United Kingdom's own aid budget, the British became alarmed at the squeeze that EEC contributions were imposing on bilateral assistance. They complained that the EEC was 'being given resources […] by the European Parliament' which outran 'the Commission's own capacity for effective administration'.[55] They demanded to know 'whether the Commission was spending the money efficiently or not'.[56] They felt this particularly strongly in the early 1990s since 'the exchange rate of the pound was going down and the contributions that had to be made […] in terms of pounds sterling […] [were] costing the ODA more'.[57] Furthermore, the ODA was 'not in a strong position domestically, as it was not a Department. Lynda Chalker was not a member of the Cabinet but a Foreign Office minister, and the developers […] were not well funded and were looked down on by the diplomats'.[58]

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[51] HEWITT, *op. cit.*, p. 92.
[52] Antonique KONING, 'The European Commission' in Aidan COX, John HEALEY & Antonique KONING (eds.), *How European Aid Works*, London: ODI, pp. 131-36.
[53] Interview with M. LAKE.
[54] ODI, *EU Aid Post-Maastricht*, London: ODI, p. 2.
[55] Lynda CHALKER, 'Britain's Role in the Multilateral Aid Agencies', speech to the ODI, 16 May 1990.
[56] Interview with P. POOLEY.
[57] *Idem.*
[58] *Idem.*

Against this backdrop, the United Kingdom argued for a 30 per cent reduction in its EDF contribution. In fact, '[t]he British Government was the most intransigent during the deadlock and succeeded in reducing its contribution in real and nominal terms'.[59] The United Kingdom emphasised its preference for bilateral assistance and for trade over aid.[60] It secured some backing from Holland, Italy and Germany, itself under pressure from the cost of reunification.[61] The impact of this United Kingdom stand (which led to a fall in its contribution by 8 per cent) was to reinforce the sentiment within the Commission that there would be no future Lomé-style Convention.[62] The adoption of a two-tranche system for payments after the MTR signalled the shift away from equal partnership towards greater control by European member states. The Green Paper, initiated in 1996 under Development Commissioner João de Deus Pinheiro (1995-99), also paved the way for negotiations (1998-2000) on a new convention, the Cotonou Agreement, that was supposed to address Lomé's shortcomings.

All the same, it should not be thought that the United Kingdom's growing inflexibility in these years bought it greater influence over European aid. Needless to say, member states such as France, which held the presidency during crucial phase of the MTR, and Germany, as the economic powerhouse of the EEC/EU, played a crucial role. The Commission was also influential, particularly through the 'personality and thinking' of Commissioner Marin, who framed discussions by widely circulating in 1993 a draft negotiating brief that included proposals on the 'democracy clause' and aid suspension mechanisms, the introduction of performance-related tranching of aid, and the reservation of special allocations for financing Europe's priority programmes.[63]

Enabling factors

So what were the factors that facilitated British influence over EEC aid? Contextual factors were clearly important, not least the opportune timing of the United Kingdom's accession to the EEC, just as the Yaoundé Convention was running out of steam. The end of the Cold War also opened up opportunities for fresh donor thinking on emerging themes such as the environment, where the United Kingdom was relatively advanced in its thinking. The end of apartheid and the resignation of Margaret Thatcher in 1990 also untied the hands of British policy-makers, hitherto forced to soft-pedal on sanctions against Pretoria, and allowed them to press more vociferously for a stronger linkage in Lomé IV between aid and respect for human rights.

Another enabling factor was the quality of Britain's foreign policy administration. Despite the Eurosceptic rhetoric of many British Ministers, FCO

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[59] Gordon CRAWFORD, 'Whither Lomé? The Mid-Term Review', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol. 34, n° 3, pp. 503-514.
[60] *La Lettre Afrique Expansion*, n° 392, 27 February 1995.
[61] *Agri Service International Newsletter*, 13 April 1995.
[62] Karin ARTS & Jessica BYRON, 'The mid-term review of the Lome IV Convention', *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 18, n° 1, 1997, p. 83.
[63] *Ibid.*, p. 76.

officials in London and Brussels were always professional in Lomé negotiations, while the ODA was frequently interested in cooperation at the operational level.[64] The United Kingdom's foreign policy machinery contained gifted individuals, such as Charles Powell, a Counsellor to UKREP Brussels (1980-83), and Tim Lankester, ODA Permanent Secretary in London (1989-94). Britain's apparatus was more coherent than the hydra-headed French administration, whose influence declined partly as a result over the Lomé years.[65] Within the Commission too, there were figures who helped the UK cause, not least Maurice Foley and Kaye Whiteman, who were said by the latter to have been 'charged—unofficially—with selling British influence in a relationship with Africa that had been French-dominated'.[66] British Development Ministers such as Timothy Raison and Chris Patten also enjoyed 'a really positive partnership' with Dieter Frisch as DG VIII Director, while Lynda Chalker got on well both with Frisch and Acting DG VIII Director, Peter Pooley.[67] It was in fact thanks to these good relations that Frisch was twice invited to address the United Kingdom Foreign Policy Select Committee, an opportunity for an exchange of views that was not afforded by other member states.

Historical linkages also facilitated British influence, not least the fact that Britain had prior experience of, and an ongoing relationship with, a large proportion of the membership of the ACP. The United Kingdom, thanks to its 'decentralised management system', was 'better represented' in the field than most other member states.[68] The British were as such better placed to shape and coordinate donor activities. Other factors that enhanced UK influence were more coincidental. Thus, the British were swift to take advantage of the opportunity afforded by British presidencies of Europe to push agendas such as food aid regulation and donor coordination. British officials were also quick to build temporary alliances, lobbying with the Dutch on the need to link EEC aid to respect for human rights, and with the Germans on the size of the Lomé IV budget for 1995-2000. Britain benefited, moreover, from the fact that EEC development assistance was not dominated by the Franco-German tandem or any other cluster of member states.

Constraints on influence

Given the above, it is perhaps surprising that the United Kingdom did not hold more sway over the direction of European aid. The reality was, however, that there were also major constraints on British influence. The first was structural. The United Kingdom was late in joining 'a club that was already working' and where the approach (e.g., *dirigiste* planning and price support mechanisms) was not of the United Kingdom's choosing.[69] As Peter Pooley pointed out, '[t]hat was the structure and it was very difficult to change'.[70]

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[64] Interview with M. LAKE.
[65] Interview with D. FRISCH.
[66] *The Guardian*, 22 February 2002.
[67] As EEC External Affairs Commissioner (1999-2004), Patten was instrumental in pushing DGVIII to work more closely with DG Trade; interview with M. LAKE.
[68] *Idem.*
[69] Interview with T. GLASER.
[70] Interview with P. POOLEY.

A related constraint was the fact that the United Kingdom was not a particularly big hitter on overseas development issues over the Lomé years. Indeed, for most of this period, the British aid programme was run by an 'administration' rather than a Ministry and its budget was shrinking. The United Kingdom was, moreover, only ever one of between 9 and 15 EEC member states, each of which could 'push its own priorities in the Council of Development Ministers if they really felt strongly about something'.[71] Britain was moreover never sure of winning the Commission over to its cause, given that the latter was much 'less bewitched by the Foreign Office than UK Ministers'.[72] In fact, the Commission had grown in self-confidence from the time of its leadership in the 1973 UNCTAD negotiations to become 'a substantial institutional presence on the development scene'.[73] According to Dieter Frisch, by the mid-1970s, the Commission was 'very much in the driving seat […] and the member countries could not push us around. We were now as professional as the others. We knew what to propose and we succeeded in pushing member states towards higher and higher levels of aid'. Against this backdrop, European Commissioners did not need British advice. This was particularly true of Cheysson, a gifted negotiator with an African diplomatic background, and Pisani, the *grand penseur* of the French Socialist Party.

Lack of popularity further constrained British influence. The United Kingdom was seen to be a semi-detached member of the Community and was deemed to be 'taking a high profile on the Brussels aid scene only when national commercial interests were at stake'. This perception limited Britain's capacity 'to persuade its EEC partners of the very real need to reform the EDF'.[74] The absence of any long-term alliances with other member states further hampered the United Kingdom's ability to harness the *méthode communautaire* to its own ends. So too did poor relations with the Commonwealth, particularly in the 1980s when Margaret Thatcher's government baulked at imposing meaningful sanctions on apartheid South Africa and helped keep 'political questions over southern Africa' off 'the official Lomé ministerial dialogue'.[75]

Ideological differences were also important. Hewitt has argued that the United Kingdom was often 'out of sync' with the EEC, proposing ideas,[76] such as aid evaluation and an equal distribution of aid between ACP and non-ACP states, that were only adopted years later.[77] This lack of synchronicity should not, however, disguise deep-seated ideological differences between the United Kingdom and much of the EEC, particularly in the 1980s when Britain signed up to World Bank structural adjustment programmes. As one former Commission official put it: 'We were deeply at odds with the World Bank in these years because we were

[71] Interview with T. GLASER.
[72] Interview with senior Commission official, Brussels, 2011.
[73] Interview with M. LAKE.
[74] HEWITT, *op. cit.*, p. 94.
[75] COSGROVE TWITCHETT, *op. cit.*, p. 136.
[76] HEWITT, *op. cit.*, p. 87.
[77] In the mid-1970s, the British Labour Minister Judith Hart was the first to suggest this aid split between ACP and non-ACP states; interview with D. Frisch.

francophone'.[78] Hewitt makes a similar point, noting that '[i]n the aid field there was nothing more likely to annoy the dominant French interests in EEC development policy than to side with the Washington-based […] World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, on matters concerning Africa […]'.[79]

Ultimately, the explanation for the United Kingdom's relative lack of influence lies in its own choices and priorities within Europe. To illustrate, the British did not lobby for key positions within DG VIII. Instead, they 'pretended this did not matter as long as aid programmes were being run effectively' and, in so doing, they lost control of the 'commanding heights'.[80] This 'lack of influence at the top' was later compounded when the United Kingdom halted, albeit temporarily, recruitment via the European fast stream.[81] This latter decision inevitably reduced the flow of British nationals working their way up to the top of (rather than being teleported into senior positions within) the Commission's hierarchy.

As regards the United Kingdom's priorities, these did not lie with DG VIII, the EDF or overseas development but with DG Trade, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and the single European market.[82] In the early 1990s, a key focus was on the commercial opportunities opening up in Eastern Europe, and the UK attached 'more importance to starting the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (which […] [would] […] be sited in London) on a businesslike footing than overhauling the EDF'.[83] The British were ultimately being pragmatic. They knew that they could not overhaul the EDF so they became 'diffident as a new member'.[84] They also foresaw the upward trend in EEC assistance and 'instead of slowing it down, they decided to join the movement and influence it'.[85] With their residual responsibility for the Commonwealth, a stagnant development assistance budget and a huge EEC aid envelope on offer to many of their former colonies, the British recognised that it was not in their interests to rock the boat. They also realised that Britain stood to benefit from lucrative EEC aid contracts.[86] Indeed, the United Kingdom's overall share of these contracts rose from 10.5 per cent in 1975 to 15.3 per cent (higher than any other member state) in 1988, with the United Kingdom performing particularly well on supplies and technical assistance (see Table 2).

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[78] Interview with M. LAKE.
[79] HEWITT, *op. cit.*, p. 90.
[80] Interview with T. GLASER.
[81] *Idem.*
[82] HEWITT & WHITEMAN, *op. cit.*, p. 143.
[83] HEWITT, *op. cit.*, p. 95.
[84] Geoffrey HOWE, 'The Future of the European Community', *International Affairs*, vol. 60, n° 2, 1984, p. 187.
[85] Interview with D. FRISCH.
[86] When the UK began competing successfully for contracts in Eastern Europe, the Commission imposed a quota preventing it 'from exceeding in contracts awarded the proportionate value of the EDF contributions'; see HEWITT, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

Table 2 EDF contracts by nationality of firm as at 31 December 1988 (millions of ECU)

EDF 4								
Nationality of Firms	Works	%	Supplies	%	Technical Assistance	%	Total	%
FRG	91.7	7.2	101.7	18.6	87.4	21.4	280.7	12.6
France	287.3	22.6	129.7	23.7	75.8	18.5	492.8	22.1
Italy	140.7	11.1	76.1	13.9	49.6	12.1	266.4	12.0
UK	56.0	4.4	112.6	20.6	63.6	15.6	232.3	10.5
EEC Total	1270.2	100	547.6	100	409.0	100	226.8	100
EDF 5								
FRG	86.6	7.9	121.3	18.8	103.3	22.2	311.1	14.1
France	248.3	22.6	128.0	19.8	93.2	20.0	469.5	21.2
Italy	102.1	9.3	66.2	10.2	45.2	9.7	213.5	9.7
UK	84.7	7.7	155.9	24.1	74.7	16.1	315.3	14.3
EEC Total	1099.5	100	646.3	100	465.6	100	2211.3	100
EDF 6								
FRG	14.8	10.1	2.6	3.9	22.5	12.8	39.9	10.2
France	2.0	1.4	14.1	20.9	24.8	14.1	40.8	10.5
Italy	38.2	26.1	2.3	3.5	17.9	10.2	58.4	15.0
UK	12.5	8.5	13.8	20.6	33.4	19.0	59.7	15.3
EEC Total	146.6	100	67.2	100	175.2	100	389.1	100

Source: DG VIII, Lome III: Mid-Term Review 1986-88, SEC (89) 1539, Brussels, 1989, p. 33.

Conclusion

This article has asked whether the United Kingdom was a constructive and influential player on the European aid scene over the Lomé years. It has shown how the United Kingdom was broadly receptive to the influence of the European Commission, particularly where the latter enjoyed some comparative advantage, whether through its operational networks or its role as a policy coordinator. The Commission's influence undoubtedly increased over time as it grew in self-confidence and began pushing for greater policy coherence, most notably via the Maastricht Treaty. The United Kingdom for its part was influential in helping to frame the first Lomé Convention, in pushing new aid evaluation procedures and in lobbying for human rights conditionality. As a rule, Britain enjoyed more influence where it had other member states on board and where it was 'on the same page as the Commission'.[87] The British were less persuasive where their arguments were not believed (the mantra 'trade not aid' was viewed as an excuse to give less aid) and where they were ideologically isolated (as with structural adjustment).[88]

[87] Interview with M. LAKE.
[88] HEWITT, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

So clearly there were reciprocal influences at work, and the UK was a 'pragmatic player', engaging constructively with the European Commission in these years.[89] While the British did sometimes have to shout long and hard in order to be heard, they were not losing out on the European aid scene, as their rhetoric on the 'stitching up' of contracts and the Commission's lack of responsiveness sometimes suggested. As Dieter Frisch put it, 'We should distinguish [foreign policy] from an area like development cooperation [where] […] the British had an interest in playing the game'.[90] It follows that the United Kingdom's status as an awkward partner cannot be traced back to its early experiences of European aid. The roots of Britain's semi-detached attitude towards Europe must lie elsewhere, probably in trade, agriculture and socio-judicial questions that infringe British sovereignty.

The election of a Labour government in 1997 did not lead to any dramatic change in the United Kingdom's broadly constructive stance on European aid. Thus, while Clare Short as Secretary of State for International Development was scathing about the wastefulness and lack of poverty focus of much European assistance, she remained engaged and was soon seeking to increase British influence over EEC, or rather EU, aid policy by forging an alliance with three other European Development Ministers (from Germany, Holland and Norway).[91] The Labour administration also established the Department for International Development (DFID) as a separate Ministry and charged it with drawing up an institutional strategy paper for maximising British influence within the EU and other international organisations. The DFID explicitly recognised the value of working through such bodies, stressing in its first White Paper on international development that '[w]e must not overstate what we can do by ourselves. We must not understate what we can do with others. In no area is this more true than in development'.[92] The DFID has maintained this constructive approach under the current Conservative-led coalition government. It has, for example, recently undertaken a Multilateral Aid Review and found the European Development Fund to be one of only 9 multilateral organisations which offer 'very good value for money for UK aid'. It has promised to 'provide funding' through these organisations 'at levels that are appropriate to their objectives and our [Britain's] ambitions'.[93]

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[89] Clara O'DONNELL & Richard WHITMAN, 'European policy under Gordon Brown', *International Affairs*, vol. 83, n° 1, 2007, p. 272.
[90] Interview with D. FRISCH.
[91] The so-called Utstein Group later evolved into the Nordic Plus group of like-minded donors.
[92] DFID, *Eliminating World Poverty*, London: DFID, 1997, p. 20.
[93] DFID, *Multilateral Aid Review*, London: DFID, 2011, p. 3.

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Britain and Africa: The Search for New Forms of Engagement

Tony CHAFER & Gordon D. CUMMING
University of Portsmouth, University of Cardiff

By the end of the First World War, Britain's overseas empire covered a quarter of the earth's land surface and included some twenty dependencies south of the Sahara.[1] Given the sheer size of this empire, it is hardly surprising that Britain opted for a low-cost system of indirect rule in Africa and elsewhere. Yet, while Britain was reluctant to use taxpayers' money to support its colonies, it was keen to prevent other industrialised powers from gaining a foothold in its dependencies. In essence, this desire to shore up influence meant that Britain had to develop its own approach to its colonies during the colonial era. In the early post-colonial decades, Britain maintained its predilection for a unilateral approach to its former African colonies but recognised the potential of multilateral agencies such as the World Bank. Britain's appreciation of the value of multilateral, alongside unilateral, approaches increased in the post–cold war period but there was still no recognition of the value of joint or 'bilateral' approaches, where two donors would systematically get together to coordinate their policies for tackling the problems of Africa. This changed when, in December 1998, the United Kingdom, together with France, signed the Saint-Malo declaration, in which the two governments promised to enhance defence cooperation and 'harmonise their policies towards Africa'.[2]

The shifting forms of British engagement in Africa over the *longue durée* have attracted scant attention in the literature, with most studies homing in on British Africa policy in the post-cold war years, particularly under recent Labour governments (1997-2010).[3] This article is the first to show how and why, over time, Britain has grafted on to its traditional approaches a joint or 'bilateral' mode of intervention. It begins by outlining the United Kingdom's unilateral and multilateral approaches to Africa over the colonial and post-colonial eras. It then sets out the driving forces behind Britain's decision to add bilateral approaches to its existing armoury for tackling the challenges of Africa, specifically poverty reduction, democratic deficits and chronic insecurity. Next, it explores the institutional and policy changes that the Saint Malo declaration has entailed. Finally, it sets out the

[1] Royal Museums Greenwich, <www.rmg.co.uk/explore/sea-and-ships/facts/faqs/general/was-it-true-that-the-sun-never-set-on-the-british-empire> (accessed 17 December 2011).
[2] The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) weblink to the declaration omits the Africa chapter; see <www.fco.gov.uk/en/news/latest-news/?view=PressS&id=10435411> (accessed 20 October 2009). Full text obtained by the authors from the FCO.
[3] See, for example, Tom PORTEOUS, *Britain in Africa*, London: Zed Books, 2008; and Julia GALLAGHER, *Britain and Africa Under Blair*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011.

constraints on, as well as the significance and likely future of, Britain's 'partnership' with France.

Going it alone or throwing in its lot?

This historical overview of the United Kingdom's traditional approaches to Africa is broken down into three phases: the colonial era (marked by a unilateral stance), the post-colonial era (when unilateral approaches continued to dominate but multilateral engagement went in tandem) and the early post-Cold War period (when multilateral modes of intervention became an increasingly important dimension of British policy).

The colonial era

Britain's African empire was always secondary to its possessions in Asia and its links with the Dominion territories (Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa). Even so Britain did secure, during the scramble for Africa in the late nineteenth century, the second largest empire in Africa. Its dependencies also accounted for more than 30 per cent of Africa's population and included strategically valuable coastal territories such as the Gold Coast (Ghana) and Nigeria and valuable settler colonies such as South Africa and Kenya.[4]

From the late nineteenth century to Ghana's independence in 1957, Britain, for all its rhetoric about the white man's burden, viewed its empire largely in terms of *realpolitik*: Africa was a source of raw materials, minerals and human resources for the industrial revolution, the war effort and Britain's great power status. The primary concern was with retaining influence through indirect rule (as developed by the likes of Lord Frederick Lugard), through the Sterling Bloc and through the transposition of British customs and values to Africa. The British government did spend small sums of money on development and poverty reduction. Thus in 1929, the Colonial Development Act allocated £1 million for infrastructural development and the Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1945 provided an annual ceiling of £120 million for ten years for the economic and social development of the colonies.[5] These were largely unilateral measures, even if the latter drew on American funding through the Marshall Plan and was supposed to open up the colonies and move them towards self-determination, as prescribed by the 1941 Atlantic Charter which British Prime Minister Winston Churchill had signed. Equally, British efforts at holding on to colonies in the post-war era were generally unilateral, as exemplified by Britain's campaign against the Mau Mau in Kenya (1952-60). There were of course exceptions. Thus, the United Kingdom held Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meetings at Chequers almost annually from 1944 to 1969. Even so, Britain retained something of its splendid isolation in its dealings with empire during the colonial era.

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[4] <www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/abolition/scramble_for_africa_article_01.shtml> (accessed 17 February 2011).

[5] Gordon CUMMING, *Aid to Africa*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001, p. 70, p. 71.

The early post-colonial decades

In the post-colonial era, the United Kingdom continued to pursue an essentially unilateral approach, even if multilateral modes of intervention were now recognised as important. While Britain continued to give priority to its realpolitik ambitions, it showed greater awareness of the need to address the problems of poverty, human rights abuses and instability in Africa. To illustrate, the United Kingdom, particularly under Labour governments, replaced its complex colonial bureaucracy with new structures, notably the Overseas Development Ministry in 1964 and a unified diplomatic service in 1968. Britain also established sizeable bilateral economic and military assistance programmes which focused heavily on the 17 African countries that had experienced British colonial rule. Following on from Harold Wilson's War on Want campaigns, the Callaghan government established the Joint Funding Scheme in 1975 to provide support to British NGOs in Africa and elsewhere. At the same time, the United Kingdom was also receptive to some multilateral, particularly World Bank–led development *nostra*, not least 'basic needs' in the 1970s, which fitted with the Labour government's poverty concerns, and structural adjustment in the 1980s, which meshed with Thatcherite monetarist doctrine and was about the promotion of free markets.

As regards the promotion of human rights and democracy, the United Kingdom did bequeath Westminster-style governments to nascent African states. But this was never a priority for Britain which failed to stand up convincingly against white minority regimes in Rhodesia and apartheid South Africa. Indeed, in 1965, Britain rejected a call by African members of the Commonwealth to impose black majority rule on Rhodesia and, in the mid-1980s, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher ignored Commonwealth pressure to intensify sanctions against South Africa—the one sub-Saharan African country where Britain did have substantial economic and strategic interests. The United Kingdom's characteristic approach was simply to turn a blind eye to human rights abuses (e.g., by Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe in Matabeleland in the early 1980s) and to hide behind the cover of the Cold War and the overriding need to keep African states within the Western bloc.

On the security front, the United Kingdom was a central pillar of Western collective security during the Cold War. Its efforts at retaining influence in its ex-colonies were part of a wider western effort to keep the USSR out. Yet, having withdrawn British forces from East of Suez by 1971 and abandoned its last African military base, Simonstown, in 1975, London had neither the will nor the capacity to become embroiled in African conflicts. Apart from efforts to stabilise Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda during the 1963-64 East African mutinies, Britain avoided military combat in Africa and steered clear of direct involvement in Cold-War trouble spots in the Horn and Southern Africa. Britain instead confined its activity to evacuating expatriates (e.g. Zanzibar, 1964), supplying arms (e.g. Nigeria, 1967-70), and deploying British Military Assistance Training Teams (BMATTs) on short-term, renewable contracts. Aside from intelligence sharing with the United States, the United Kingdom displayed little readiness to cooperate on this front, as was evident in its refusal to be drawn into a (US-led) UN military intervention in the Belgian Congo in the early 1960s.

The post–Cold War era

The early post–Cold War era saw a growing recognition of the importance of multilateral, alongside unilateral, approaches. The narrowly realist Conservative government of John Major (1990-97) reduced the development assistance budget to 0.31 per cent, its lowest-ever level as a percentage of GNP, and aimed for selectivity in the number and choice of bilateral aid recipients. Bound by the United Kingdom's rising commitments to the European Development Fund (EDF), the British Overseas Development Minister, Lynda Chalker, talked up 'the advantages of the multilateral approach' and the importance of multilaterals 'as the "natural leaders" in collective developmental efforts'.[6] The United Kingdom did, moreover, operate increasingly through multilateral channels in areas such as debt cancellation and democracy promotion, even if market rather than democratic reform was the ultimate goal of the Conservative government.[7] On security, the Conservative government was generally prepared to act alone, providing diplomatic support in peace negotiations (as in the Arusha Talks), supplying police training to over 30 African countries and deploying BMATTs more heavily in countries with which Britain had had no direct colonial connection (e.g. Namibia and Mozambique). It was, however, reluctant to intervene militarily and actually lobbied against a more concerted UN intervention in Rwanda in 1994 and Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo or DRC) in 1996.

Pressures for renewed engagement

The United Kingdom's approach to Africa has become more variegated and multilayered since the late 1990s, with unilateral policies coexisting with multilateral approaches and, crucially from the perspective of this article, complemented by 'bilateral' and/ or 'bi-multilateral' forms of engagement (where the United Kingdom and another power get together and then bring others on board). While these bilateral and 'bi-multi' modes of intervention are not entirely new, previous examples of such cooperation are rare, implicit and tacit as, for example, when the United Kingdom and the United States led the international community in arguing against international intervention following the Rwanda genocide in 1994.[8] By contrast, the partnership with France that was announced at Saint-Malo in 1998 was explicitly and formally enshrined in the Saint-Malo declaration and the communiqués of subsequent Anglo-French summits, notably in 2001, 2004 and 2008. It is this form of bilateral intervention that is the focus of the rest of this article.

Before undertaking this analysis, however, it is worth stressing that Britain has continued with both unilateral and multilateral approaches over the last decade or so. The United Kingdom's unilateral approach to poverty reduction can be discerned in the prominence of the Department for International Development (DFID) and the fact that bilateral assistance has, over the last 15 years, risen from just over half to almost two-thirds of the size of the overall British aid budget (see Table 1). While

[6] Lynda CHALKER, 'Britain's Approach to Multilateral Aid', *Development Policy Review*, vol. 12, no. 3, London: Overseas Development Institute, 1994.
[7] Gordon CRAWFORD, *Foreign Aid and Political Reform*, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2000.
[8] Neil FENTON, *Understanding the Security Council*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004, p. 140.

this has inevitably entailed a fall in the proportion of total aid taken up by multilateral assistance, it has not precluded significant rises in the absolute levels of multilateral aid over the same period. It was at least partly thanks to these increases that successive Labour governments were able to push forward key multilateral initiatives relating to Africa, such as the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative, aid untying, the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. The United Kingdom has also been very active within the European Union (EU), together with the Nordics and the Netherlands, in building up the capacity of the African Union (AU) and making it into an effective political voice for Africa.

Table 1: UK net overseas development assistance or oda (US dollars, millions)

	1986-89	1991-94	1995-98	2000-03	2004-05	2006-07	2008
Bilateral oda (& % total)	1510 (55.7)	1697 (54.4)	1823 (55.0)	3214 (63.4)	6754 (72.4)	7160 (64.2)	7367 (64.1)
Multilateral oda (& % total)	1198 (44.3)	1419 (45.6)	1489 (45.0)	1858 (36.6)	2573 (27.6)	3994 (35.8)	4133 (35.9)
Total	2709	3116	3312	5072	9327	11154	11500

Source: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), *Development Cooperation Report*, OECD, Paris, various years; and OECD, *Peer Review: United Kingdom*, Paris: OECD, various years. Provisional figures suggest that bilateral aid made up 66 and 64 per cent of total oda (11283 and 13763 US million dollars) in 2009 and 2010 respectively.

On the democracy promotion front, the United Kingdom has pressed unilaterally for reforms through its own diplomatic channels, through aid suspensions and through civil society building programmes. It has also, however, recognised the advantages of the multilateral approach, notably working through the EU Africa Working Group (AWG) and signing up to EU aid sanctions against states which abuse the electoral process (Togo, 2002), hamper democratic development in neighbouring countries (Liberia, 2000) or flout the rule of law (Zimbabwe, 2002).

The security picture has been equally mixed, with the United Kingdom intervening unilaterally in Sierra Leone and maintaining BMATTS in numerous countries. However, since the 2000 Sierra Leone intervention, the United Kingdom has had much more regular recourse to multilateral mechanisms to address African security issues, notably the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP).[9] The United Kingdom committed itself to the creation of a European Rapid Reaction Force by 2003 and also entered into a Standby Agreement with the UN earmarking British forces for the purpose of emergency peacekeeping. The Blair government also laid out new guidelines on

[9] With the entry into force of the 2007 Lisbon Treaty, the EU's European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) was re-baptized the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).

arms sales; signed up to the 1998 EU arms code and worked hard—within the UNSC and via conferences calling for the introduction of a global diamond certification scheme (the Kimberley Process)—to prevent conflict diamonds from being used to fund wars in Sierra Leone, Angola and the Congo.[10]

Given the complementarity, longevity and seemingly path-dependent nature of these unilateral and multilateral approaches, it is worth asking why the United Kingdom felt the need to introduce a joint or bilateral approach to the challenges of Africa. What drivers were pushing the United Kingdom to cooperate with France on Africa in the late 1990s?

In Britain's case, the election of a reformist Labour government and its creation of the DFID in 1997 signalled a new readiness to engage with and prioritise Africa. In this context, the Labour administration espoused a 'third way' Africa policy, with an emphasis on the interdependence between national and international interest, on the 'ethical dimension' of foreign policy and on Britain's role 'as a catalyst and advocate for positive change in Africa in multilateral bodies'.[11] British policy-makers equally acknowledged that they could only make progress on the MDGs if they became more active in francophone Africa and engaged more effectively with France, as the only other European power with the ability and will to intervene south of the Sahara. They also realised that Africa, particularly on security matters, represented a propitious domain for cooperation with the French and a possible stepping stone towards making Britain 'a leading partner in Europe', despite its failure to join the euro.[12] Equally, they recognised that France, under the modernising socialist government of Lionel Jospin (1997-2002), was anxious to scale down its presence, at least in some francophone African countries, and keen to realign its diplomatic and military efforts to its key commercial interests, which were increasingly in anglophone African countries. After the debacle of its involvement in Rwanda, France was also anxious to shake off its image as 'gendarme of Africa', reduce its military presence and ensure that future operations took place within a UN or EU framework.

The United Kingdom and France also had common interests that were pushing them to cooperate. As middle-sized powers, they had become aware of their inability to cope—using unilateral or even multilateral channels—with the scale of Africa's crises and they were facing growing challenges to their privileged positions within the UNSC, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. By working together, they could garner a majority of the votes on the Security Council simply by drawing on 'a set of contacts and influences globally which were very complementary'.[13] Second, by cooperating within the EU, the United Kingdom and France could swing votes within the Politics and Security Council (PSC) and the AWG. Third, by presenting a united front, they could restrict the capacity of African regimes to play them off against each other; avoid tripping each other up in their attempts to resolve crises in former colonies such as Zimbabwe and Côte d'Ivoire,

[10] PORTEOUS, *Britain and Africa*, *op. cit.*, p. 47.
[11] Tony LLOYD, Africa Day Conference, Lancaster House, London, 26 May 1999.
[12] Tony BLAIR, Lord Mayor's Banquet, 1 November 1997.
[13] Personal communication, former UK official, New York, 2008.

and lower transaction costs at a time when the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) was suffering from the closure of a number of African embassies and the loss of 20 per cent of its staff working on Africa[14] and the French administration, for its part, was losing African expertise through the absorption of the Development Ministry into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) in 1998. Fourth, by joining forces, Paris and London can—in an age of media broadcasting—better respond to threats arising from Africa, whether from illegal immigration, terrorism, piracy, AIDS, drugs trafficking or money laundering. Finally, by pooling their resources, the United Kingdom and France could enhance their relative power and compensate for the fact that they have become a smaller part of African foreign relations, not least since the rise of dynamic new suitors, such as China, India, Japan and the Middle East countries. According to a former British Minister: 'If we use our history cleverly, one plus one equals three. But that is still in a world where you need ten to score on a lot of problems'.[15]

The comparative advantages of cooperation came to the fore at moments of crisis. Thus, after the Al-Qaeda attacks of 11 September 2001, the United Kingdom and France placed increased emphasis on security in EU African policy and on the need for a more proactive Anglo-French stance on Africa, lest it become a breeding ground for terrorism. Subsequently, during the 2003 Iraq War, British and French policy-makers were keen to find common ground on Africa as a way of overcoming the divisions caused by this conflict.

Establishing a new mode of intervention

The Saint-Malo Declaration represented a pledge by the United Kingdom and France to set aside past rivalry and 'harmonise their policies towards Africa'. It served as the catalyst for the development of closer formal and informal ties between policy-making elites in the two foreign policy establishments. The formalisation of these linkages can be seen in the inclusion of a distinct 'Africa chapter' at Anglo-French summits. There are, moreover, now six-monthly meetings between staff from the British and French Foreign Ministry Africa Directorates. Similarly, meetings are scheduled three to four times a year at a senior level between the DFID and French Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials working on international development. Equally, there is an exchange programme involving officials from, on the British side, the Africa Directorates of the FCO and the DFID and, on the French side, from the Africa and Globalisation Directorates of the MFA. Similarly, the French and British defence ministries exchanged *chargés de mission* from 2005-08. In addition, a French officer is embedded with British forces in Nairobi and a British officer was until 2009 seconded to French forces in Dakar.

Turning to informal links, these have been event-, issue- or personality- driven. They include occasional joint ministerial visits, the first of which involved a trip in March 1999 to Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire by the then British and French foreign ministers, Robin Cook and Hubert Védrine, and the most recent of which was by the

[14] *The Observer*, 9 January 2005.
[15] Personal communication, former UK Minister, 2009.

former British Foreign Secretary, David Miliband, and the former French Foreign Minister, Bernard Kouchner, to the DRC in November 2008. Equally, there have been joint ministerial statements by, for example, the British Prime Minister Gordon Brown and French President Nicolas Sarkozy on Sudan/ Darfur (March 2008).[16] There is, moreover, a tendency for newly appointed British and French ambassadors to visit Paris and London respectively before beginning their African postings.[17] Many of these linkages have been possible partly because particular British and French policy-makers have perceived such ties as being in the common interests of Britain and France and partly because these same elites have 'got on' together. This was the case with Cook and Védrine and with Miliband and Kouchner. Other close links were forged between successive heads of the British and French Foreign Ministry Africa Directorates (e.g., James Bevan and Bruno Joubert) as well as between Africa advisers in Downing Street and the Élysée.

These informal ties have also been important within multilateral forums. To illustrate, senior British and French officials, usually from the DFID and the Élysée respectively, have engaged in regular bilateral exchanges in their capacity as G8 Africa special representatives—a grouping established in 2002 and reinvigorated ahead of the G8 summit in 2005.[18] These meetings, coupled with strong political will at the highest level, have helped the United Kingdom and France to keep Africa high up the G8 agenda, despite US lack of enthusiasm, and to ensure African representation at G8 summits, notably in Evian (2003) and Gleneagles (2005).[19] Within the EU, the United Kingdom and France have for some time engaged in informal exchanges between actual meetings of the Committee on Development Cooperation (CODEV) and the AWG. The scope for such consultation has increased in recent years as some meetings have become more frequent (e.g. the AWG has been convened weekly rather than monthly since July 2009) and as new forums have emerged. The latter include the twice-weekly meetings of the ambassador-level Political and Security Committee or PSC which has, since its creation in 2000, taken a lead role on ESDP missions in Africa.

Informal and institutional links between Britain and France are most closely intertwined at the UN. As permanent members of the UNSC, Britain and France are invited—at permanent representative level—to attend informal lunches hosted by the Secretary-General.[20] Furthermore, Britain, France and the United States make up the P3, an informal mechanism, launched in late 1997, which facilitates consultation on UNSC matters. According to one British official, 'Within the P3, we sometimes speak first to the French and other times we speak to the US first. At other times all three speak simultaneously'.[21] With two-thirds of UNSC business relating to Africa, the P3 has been an important arena for Anglo-French cooperation, particularly when

[16] <www.nytimes.com/auth/login?URI=http://www.nytimes.com/2007/07/20/world/europe/20iht-france.4.6757003.html> (accessed 20 July 2007).
[17] Personal communication, FCO official, 2009.
[18] Personal communication, DFID, 2009.
[19] African leaders were instrumental in placing Africa on the G8 agenda as from the 2002 Kananaskis summit; see Alex VINES, 'Into Africa', *World Today*, March 2005.
[20] Personal communications, FCO official, 2009.
[21] Personal communications, FCO official, 2009.

the British and French ambassadors to the UN have enjoyed a good relationship. This was certainly true of relations between Sir Emyr Jones Parry (2003-07) and French Permanent Representative, Jean-Marc de la Sablière (2002-07). Their personal rapport was no doubt facilitated by the fact that neither man enjoyed good relations with the truculent US Ambassador, John Bolton.[22] It was in fact regularly the case during the Bush presidency that the P3 initiative would see Anglo-French talks to coordinate positions as a prelude to trying to bring the United States on board.

There have, however, been clear limits to Anglo-French efforts to build institutional bridges. There is in fact a near-total absence of 'institutional mechanisms that bring ministers, officials and institutions together'.[23] Indeed, the main bilateral forum for exchange has remained the Franco-British summit, a gathering whose existence predated Saint-Malo by over a decade. It has also taken over ten years for the DFID and the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) to sign, in December 2009, an overarching agreement that focuses mainly on non-contentious sectors, such as health and education. There have, moreover, been no staff exchanges between the DFID and the AFD, and there have been problems with filling some positions, particularly on the British side: for example, the United Kingdom stopped sending a *chargé de mission* to the Defence Ministry in Paris in 2008 and ended its practice of embedding an officer in French forces in Dakar in July 2009. Significantly too, there has been no co-location of French and British embassies in Africa.

Clearly this lack of institutional architecture 'does not mean that cooperation is not taking place'.[24] However, it makes collaboration dependent upon officials and ministers actually 'getting on' or at least sharing a common appreciation of the benefits of closer cooperation.[25] This has not always been the case. Relations were, for example, particularly difficult between British Secretary of State for International Development, Clare Short, and French Minister for Cooperation ('Development Minister'), Charles Josselin.[26]

In other instances, the 'partnership' does not work because of a lack of awareness of its existence or because officials express uncertainty as to whom their interlocutor should be. This phenomenon is less common in international organisations, but there have been many occasions when policy-makers have proven unable to square British and French positions. Thus while the French did sign up to aid and debt cancellation commitments at the Gleneagles Summit (2005), they were unhappy about the United Kingdom's attempt to use this forum to sideline the recommendations of the NEPAD and impose the findings of the Blair Commission

[22] Personal communications, former UK officials in New York and London, 2008.
[23] Personal communication, FCO official, 2008.
[24] Personal communication, FCO, London, 2009.
[25] Personal communication, FCO, London, 2009.
[26] In personal communications with the authors, Ms Short commented that she was 'not aware' of any Anglo-French cooperation.

on summit participants.[27] More generally, within the EU, DFID does not see France as an obvious partner on African development and is closer to the 'likeminded countries' (the Nordics and the Dutch). In the UN too, divergent interests were evident at the time of the 2003 Iraq War when, in the context of the proposed second resolution, Anglo-French competition over the votes of the three African UNSC members (Angola, Cameroon and Guinea) was ferocious.

Finally, both the United Kingdom and France have remained wary of pooling their resources. Thus, rather than merging its missions with those of the French or other European powers, as the logic of the emerging European Common Foreign and Security policy might suggest, Britain has instead opened new embassies in Africa (e.g. Eritrea and Mali in 2001; Guinea in 2003). Questions of national sovereignty have similarly prevented France from pooling its diplomatic resources in Africa.

Towards partnership in practice?

Having demonstrated that there is now a clearer framework for Anglo-French coordination, we will examine whether Britain and France have actually collaborated on their core priorities for Africa, namely tackling poverty, promoting democracy and building peace.

Working together to reduce poverty?

The United Kingdom and France have publicly supported each other's high-profile poverty-reducing initiatives. For example on health, the United Kingdom backed France's UNITAID proposal, which was formally launched in 2006 and aimed at financing vaccinations through a tax on international flights.[28] By the same token, Paris supported the International Finance Facility for Immunisation, a scheme proposed initially by London in January 2003 and subsequently by Britain and France in 2006 as a means of funding programmes of the Global Alliance for Vaccination and Immunisation.[29] Similarly, on education, the United Kingdom made a joint statement with France in March 2008, with Gordon Brown and Nicolas Sarkozy promising to help get 16 million children into school in Africa by 2010 and every child by 2015.[30]

Alongside these strategic announcements, London has engaged in a three-way dialogue with Paris and the African Development Bank to coordinate support to this organisation, notably on the issue of debt sustainability.[31] Equally, Britain and France have formed a 'silent partnership' (where one donor funds and another agency implements a programme) on education. With no diplomatic representation

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[27] See Alex VINES & Thomas CARGILL, 'Le monde doit nous juger sur l'Afrique', *Politique Africaine*, n° 101, 2006.

[28] Initially conceived by the French and Brazilian Presidents in 2003, UNITAID was subsequently launched by France, Britain, Brazil, Chile and Norway.

[29] OECD, *Peer Review: France*, OECD: Paris, 2008, p. 40.

[30] <www.guardian.co.uk/news/2008/mar/27/sarkozy.brown.france.statevisit> (accessed 20 October 2009).

[31] Personal communication, FCO official, 2008.

in Niger, the DFID provided 7 million euros to the AFD to promote primary education through the Fast Track Initiative.

Ultimately, however, Anglo-French collaboration on poverty reduction has remained limited. Thus, although London and Paris both espouse the MDGs, policy-makers in the United Kingdom and France do not attach the same priority to these goals. While the DFID has recently toned down its near-exclusive focus on the MDGs, it has, since 1997, consistently made poverty reduction central to its aid programme, enshrining it in legislation (International Development Act, 2002) and providing unprecedented levels of aid (all untied), to the least developed countries (LDCs).[32] In contrast, French policy-makers have remained sceptical about poverty reduction targets, which they see as unrealistic and overly technocratic. They contend that it is by promoting trade and growth that donors create the conditions in which African countries can fund their own social programmes.[33] In line with this thinking, the French administration has retained policies that sit uncomfortably with the MDGs, not least aid tying and the allocation of a decreasing share of aid to LDCs. Moreover, the MFA has continued to prioritise French cultural projects, while the AFD, which has taken over many of the Foreign Ministry's overseas aid-related functions, has retained a banking culture and a strong emphasis on hard loans and profitable investments.

Against this backdrop, it is unsurprising that joint initiatives on poverty reduction have not always been followed up. Thus, while the United Kingdom backed France's UNITAID proposal, it did not introduce this tax itself but confined its support to a budgetary contribution. Furthermore, while France promised to match Britain's commitment on school places, it only provided £50 million for one year compared to the DFID's commitment of £500 million over three years.[34] Anglo-French cooperation has also remained weak at the programmatic level: the British contribution to the education scheme in Niger is paltry when it is considered how large the DFID budget is: 13.8 billion US dollars in 2010 (see Table 1). That this has not happened comes down to an issue of trust. British officials had expected the French to follow up on the United Kingdom's funding of the Niger scheme by financing a DFID-run education project in Rwanda, but this fell through when the French ambassador was expelled from Kigali in 2006. France was invited to suggest an alternative country yet failed to do so.

Promoting political reform: towards a common approach?

Over the last decade or so, the United Kingdom and France have also taken hesitant steps towards closer cooperation on the promotion of democracy and human rights. The key forum for Anglo-French exchanges has been the EU, particularly through the work of the AWG, the CODEV and more recently the Africa-EU Panel on Democratic Governance and Human Rights. In line with the EU Common Position of 25 May 1998 on human rights, democratic principles, the rule of law and good governance, the British and the French have cooperated on a number of

[32] OECD, *Peer Review: The United Kingdom*, Paris: OECD, 2006.
[33] Personal communications, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Paris, 2008.
[34] Personal communications, MFA and DFID officials, 2009.

African cases. In Kenya, for example, there was 'good, close cooperation' between Britain and France in the aftermath of the troubled elections of 27 December 2007, when the French ensured that the United Kingdom channelled its response through the EU, rather than adopting a more unilateral stance.[35] The United Kingdom and France have also liaised regularly on Zimbabwe, particularly since 2004 when London and Paris effectively struck a deal whereby France backs UK efforts on Zimbabwe within the EU, while the British support France on Côte d'Ivoire in the UNSC.

Alongside policy coordination, there has also been limited Anglo-French cooperation at a programmatic level. The best example is a four-year silent partnership ('Media for Democracy and Good Governance') in the DRC (2007-2011) aimed at promoting political freedom via the media. The DFID has allocated £10 million to what is its largest media project in Africa, while France Coopération Internationale (FCI) has carried out the project.[36]

However, active collaboration on democracy and human rights has been patchy.[37] In 1999-2000, the United Kingdom was pushing for EU aid sanctions against Liberia, whose president, Charles Taylor, was supplying arms to Sierra Leonean rebels in their civil war against the democratically elected government of Tejan Kabbah. However, France ignored UK demands and only gave support when Taylor subsequently supported rebel forces in Côte d'Ivoire and began destabilising France's wider sphere of influence in West Africa.[38] In February 2003 the limits of Anglo-French coordination on Zimbabwe became clear when France invited President Mugabe to a Franco-African summit on the day European sanctions expired against this dictator. The United Kingdom, which had been lobbying for tougher measures, acquiesced in exchange for a promise of French support to prolong European sanctions after the summit.

British and French discourse on democracy promotion became more closely aligned with the appointment of the human rights-oriented Bernard Kouchner as Foreign Minister. Yet differences soon arose over the response to be taken to coups in francophone countries such as Mauritania in 2008; Niger, Guinea, and Madagascar in 2009; and Niger again in 2010. While the United Kingdom was openly critical, the French took a more softly-softly approach. The case of Madagascar was particularly revealing. Here the United Kingdom adopted a robust stance, with Lord Malloch-Brown becoming the only European minister publicly to condemn the coup from the outset. However, Britain had closed its embassy in 2005 and was thus at a disadvantage compared to the French, who had retained their diplomatic presence and 'initially took an even softer line than the AU'.[39]

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[35] Personal communications, FCO (2009) and MFA (2008).
[36] Personal communication, FCO official, 2009. The initial figure was $8 million; see <www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications/DRC-countryplan08-10%5B1%5D.pdf> (accessed 12 February 2010).
[37] Personal communication, MFA official, 2009.
[38] Personal communication, former UK official in New York, 2009.
[39] Personal communication, former UK Minister, 2009.

In order to understand this relative lack of cooperation, it is worth pointing to what Fareed Zakaria refers to as 'systemic, domestic and other influences' that have constrained coordination.[40] At the 'systemic' level, bilateral cooperation between the United Kingdom and France within the EU has been limited by the need to take into account the views of 25 other countries plus the European Commission. Divergent interests have further restricted the scope for a better coordinated Anglo-French approach. Thus, Britain has tended to adopt a less forthright stance on political freedom towards allies in the war on terror (e.g. Ethiopia) and towards countries in its 'sphere of influence' (e.g. Rwanda), while France has typically adopted a softly-softly approach towards its former colonies, notably in West Africa.[41] As for domestic influences, coordination has been hampered by internal wrangling within the British and French systems. In Britain, the main problem has been competition between the DFID and the FCO which has led to parallel African policies, allegations by the DFID that the FCO is prioritising strategic and commercial interests over developmental needs, and accusations by the FCO that the DFID gives priority to economic development concerns over questions of political freedom.[42] In France, there have also been divisions, with the Élysée typically being less forthright on human rights than the Foreign Ministry. This distinction was less obvious when the French 'Development Minister' Jean-Marie Bockel was leading the charge on human rights but the sacking of Bockel, and his replacement with Alain Joyandet, indicated a downgrading of human rights concerns.[43] This in turn led British policy-making elites to question whether they were only dealing with the more enlightened parts of the French political establishment, whilst other French actors are still acting in ways that are underhand and reminiscent of '*la Françafrique'*.[44] Finally, 'other influences' include ideational factors, not least the fact that British and French policy-making elites have a different understanding of key concepts such as human rights and governance. To illustrate, the British emphasise civil and political liberties, with particular reference to women's rights, whereas the French stress the economic and social rights of all citizens, alongside civil and political liberties. Furthermore, the United Kingdom sees governance in economic and technical terms as a way of ensuring a streamlined central state, whereas the French view this concept in more overtly political terms as a means of promoting robust local and central state structures that are legitimate and provide an effective legal framework (an *État de droit*).

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[40] Fareed ZAKARIA, 'Realism and Domestic Politics: A Review Essay', *International Security*, vol. 17, n° 1, 1992, p. 198.

[41] See Richard YOUNGS, *Is European Democracy Promotion on the Wane?*, CEPS Working Document n° 292, 2008.

[42] Tom PORTEOUS, 'British government policy in sub-Saharan Africa', *International Affairs*, vol. 81, no. 2, 2005, p. 286.

[43] Personal communication, MFA, Paris, 2009. Bockel's dismissal came after his outspoken stance on human rights provoked protests by Omar Bongo, former President of oil-rich Gabon.

[44] The Angolagate arms-for-oil scandal which came to court in 2008 is an example of this. See also 'Entre Paris et Dakar', *Le Monde*, 12 June 2010.

Co-constructing peace and security?

There have been two main forms of security collaboration: ESDP military missions and the training of African peacekeepers.[45] To begin with ESDP missions, the United Kingdom and France have been instrumental in establishing the institutional framework within which European peacekeeping operations have been launched. Thus, they were the key players in the establishment of the PSC, the EU Military Committee (the supreme military body within the European Council) and the European rapid reaction force (initially proposed at the Saint-Malo summit).[46] Equally, Britain and France have collaborated in actual ESDP missions. They cooperated actively on Operation Artemis (DRC, June-September 2003), which aimed to stabilise the humanitarian situation in Bunia (eastern DRC) following the withdrawal of Ugandan forces. This was the first 'autonomous' EU military operation (that is, without recourse to NATO assets) and the first ESDP operation outside Europe. The United Kingdom sent 100 engineers, who played a key role, resurfacing the runway at Bunia and thereby enabling supplies to be flown in. Britain also persuaded a reluctant Ugandan government to offer airport facilities at Entebbe.[47] France was the 'framework nation', providing the operational headquarters and the majority—90 per cent—of the 1400-strong force for this operation.

Anglo-French cooperation was also significant in securing the launch of the other three ESDP missions in Africa to date. For EUFOR DRC (July-November 2006), which aimed to support the UN in supervising the 2006 Congolese elections, the French provided, together with Germany, the largest number of troops, while the United Kingdom made the largest bilateral contribution (50 million euros) to the cost of the elections. For EUFOR Chad/Central African Republic (CAR) (January 2008-March 2009), which was designed to 'help create the security conditions necessary for reconstruction' in Chad and the CAR before handing over to a UN force, MINURCAT II, France was again the largest contributor (2500 out of 3700 troops). Initially, Britain's Ministry of Defence (MOD) blocked European funding, suspecting France of using the ESDP/UN to shore up its influence in Chad and the CAR. In the end, however, the United Kingdom co-sponsored the UN Resolution (1778) authorising the mission and London sent two staff officers to the operational headquarters (HQ) in Paris and two to the field HQ in Chad, as well as unblocking the money for the operation following a phone call from the French President to the then UK Prime Minister, Gordon Brown.[48] The fourth mission was EU NAVFOR Operation Atalanta, which began in December 2008 and is ongoing. It seeks to prevent piracy off the Somali coast and is the first ESDP mission to be led by the United Kingdom, with Northwood as Command HQ. Britain appears to have become involved, partly due to pressure on the MOD from the United Kingdom's diplomatic mission in Brussels, anxious that Britain had not participated militarily in

[45] For further details, see Tony CHAFER & Gordon CUMMING, 'Beyond Fashoda: Anglo-French Security Cooperation', *International Affairs*, vol. 86, no. 5, 2010.
[46] Full agreement was only reached on this force, with German support, in 2001.
[47] Niagalé BAGAYOKO, 'Les politiques européennes de prévention', *Les Champs de Mars*, vol. 16, p. 103.
[48] Personal communication, UK official, December 2009.

the previous two ESDP military operations, and partly because of private sector lobbying for British engagement, since London is a major international hub for commercial shipping and hosts the International Maritime Organisation.

Anglo-French cooperation on ESDP missions has been facilitated by the fact that the European Council, rather than the Commission, is increasingly playing the lead role in EU African policy, as it is the Council, often pressed by France and with British support or acquiescence, that is tasked with planning and conducting missions. That said, collaboration did not begin in earnest until Operation Artemis in 2003, that is, after the United Kingdom's unilateral operation in Sierra Leone in 2000 and France's initial intervention in Côte d'Ivoire in 2002.[49] In fact, even after Operation Artemis in 2003, Anglo-French collaboration has continued to be more about the coincidence of agendas than any agreement systematically to work together on African crises. There have, moreover, still been divergences, with the United Kingdom tending to look first to work with the UN on peacekeeping operations in Africa and France looking in the first instance to the EU.[50]

Turning to the training African peacekeepers, here too there has been increased Anglo-French cooperation. By the late 1990s, the United Kingdom, France and, indeed, the United States, working within the P3, had recognised the need to harmonise their capacity-building programmes in Africa. In this context, they established in West Africa a regional network of training centres that would reduce duplication. Thus, the focus of the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre in Accra, for which the United Kingdom provided substantial start-up funding, is on operational level training; the École de Maintien de la Paix in Bamako undertakes tactical-level training (the United Kingdom is represented on the School board); and the National Defence College in Abuja undertakes strategic-level training. Significantly too, the United Kingdom and France have cooperated on military training exercises in Tanzania (2001) as well as in Ghana and Benin (2004).

At the same time, the United Kingdom and France have also provided support to regional and sub-regional organisations, such as the AU and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). They have provided support for the AU mission in Sudan, with funding from the Africa Peace Facility (a mechanism financed by the EDF and established with strong United Kingdom and French support in 2004). They have also backed AU efforts to create its own institutional framework, the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). Moreover, the establishment of the EURORECAMP programme to train African peacekeepers in 2008—with France as the 'framework nation', a French general as its director and a British officer as its deputy director—is also supposed to ensure a better coordinated EU approach to training AU peacekeepers.

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[49] France nonetheless offered diplomatic support to the British intervention. The UK also backed France's request for UN peacekeepers in Côte d'Ivoire; see Sébastien LOISEL, 'Entente cordiale ou moteur européen?', *Le Champs de Mars*, vol. 15, 2004, p. 52.

[50] J. H. MATLARY, *European Union Security Dynamics*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, pp. 101-2.

Ultimately, however, there have been limits to Anglo-French coordination on training. Thus, while the United Kingdom did replace its initial African training programme with a joined-up mechanism, known as the Africa Conflict Prevention Pool (ACPP)—where the FCO, DFID and MOD pooled their conflict prevention budgets—this scheme has continued to function unilaterally and without linking up with other powers on conflict management. Similarly, France has carried on doing a great deal of training on its own via its fourteen regional military training schools, all of which are based in francophone countries and use French as the language of instruction. With pre-positioned forces, totalling some 9000 personnel, in Dakar, Libreville, Djibouti, La Réunion and—at the time of writing (December 2011)—Abidjan, France has also been inclined to undertake capacity-building initiatives on its own. France thus provided a Local Area Network (LAN) to the East African brigade (EASBRIG) of the African Standby Force, without even discussing it with the British, despite the fact that the United Kingdom was playing the lead role in developing EASBRIG.[51]

Conclusion

The United Kingdom pursued a unilateral approach to its colonies during the colonial era and combined this with multilateral forms of engagement in the post-colonial and, above all, the post-Cold War eras. The election of Tony Blair's first Labour government added a layer of sophistication to existing forms of unilateral and multilateral engagement and introduced joint or 'bilateral' cooperation with France on Africa. This new approach has ensured that formal and informal ties have developed between policy-makers in each country. It has also enhanced policy cooperation, particularly on security issues, though less so on poverty reduction and democracy promotion.

In practice, however, Anglo-French cooperation has been 'uneven, often very personality-driven and event- and political interest-driven', with collaboration often limited to high profile issues and major crises, such as the post-election debacle in Côte d'Ivoire in 2010-11 where the French took the lead but were careful to keep the British informed.[52] National interests (actual and perceived) have helped to ensure that policy coordination has been restricted mainly to instances where the two countries have convergent agendas, notably in the peace and security field. As one ECOWAS official put it, 'strategic interests always predominate and the United Kingdom and France only cooperate when it is to their mutual benefit to do so'.[53]

What then does the future hold for bilateral partnerships involving the United Kingdom? There are certainly grounds for arguing that the United Kingdom government should continue coordinating its efforts with other major actors in Africa, such as France. Such an approach would be broadly consistent with the logic of the European External Action Service and its efforts to ensure enhanced foreign policy coordination at the EU level. It would equally take stock of very real fiscal and resource constraints which mean that the United Kingdom can no longer afford

[51] Personal communication, FCO official, 2009.
[52] Personal communication, FCO, 2011.
[53] Personal communication, Abuja, 2009.

to bear the costs and risks of intervening alone on key issues, such as peace and security, migration, development, democracy promotion and climate change. The current British government has not been oblivious to these arguments, as the close alliance between David Cameroon and Nicolas Sarkozy in the recent campaign in Libya clearly illustrated.

However, more systematic cooperation with the French on Africa seems unlikely for a number of reasons. First, Britain's Conservative-dominated coalition government, with its openly anti-European credentials, will be wary of any partnership with France that might result in an increase in the number of autonomous ESDP missions and the possibility of a permanent European HQ to run such operations. Second, Anglo-French relations more generally have taken a downturn over disputes about the eurozone crisis, disagreements over the EU treaty aimed at consolidating a new fiscal pact and diplomatic spats over which country is more prone to have its triple A credit rating reduced.[54] Third, while the two countries clearly do have shared interests in maintaining peace and tackling international crime on the continent, they are also—against the backdrop of the ongoing global financial crisis—economic competitors in Africa. The UK, with its 'prosperity agenda', and France, with its emphasis on developing trade and economic links, notably with South Africa and Nigeria, are in competition with each other for the lucrative trade and investment opportunities offered by some of the world's fastest growing markets.[55] The United Kingdom's coalition government is also committed to a results-based and trade-oriented approach to aid. While this might offer scope for strategic collaboration with countries such as France on ways of reducing duplication and promoting regional integration, it is unlikely to encourage more direct programmatic forms of cooperation, apart from in the peace and security field, where there are clearly shared interests.

Given the doubts surrounding the future of Britain's entente with France, it is worth asking whether there are any other donors with which the United Kingdom could forge a new bilateral partnership. In the Northern hemisphere, the prospects for such cooperation are not great, given that the United States is too 'unpredictable' on Africa and too uninterested in its developmental needs,[56] while Nordic states prefer to operate on a multilateral basis. Where, however, there might be scope for such collaboration is with emerging economies such as China which are themselves becoming donors and which could complement the United Kingdom's traditional approach to Africa and bring valuable insights and expertise drawn from their growing experience of South-South cooperation.[57]

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[54] 'French credit downgrade', *The Observer*, 18 December 2011.
[55] The official visits to Africa by Minister for Africa Henry Bellingham and Prime Minister David Cameron in 2011 to promote trade links with the continent are a clear sign of this new emphasis.
[56] Tom PORTEOUS, 'British government', *op. cit.*, p. 293.
[57] 'UK seeks China aid partnership in Africa', *BBC News*, 5 October 2010.

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Carte de l'Afrique / Map of Africa (2011)

Abréviations et acronymes / Abbreviations and acronyms

ACP	African Caribbean Pacific (Group) (Groupe) Afrique, Caraïbes, Pacifique
ACPP	Africa Conflict Prevention Pool
ADB	African Development Bank
AFD	Agence Française de Développement
APSA	African Peace and Security Architecture Architecture africaine de paix et de sécurité
AWG	Africa Working Group
BAD	Banque africaine de développement
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CEA	Commission Économique pour l'Afrique
CEDEAO	Communauté économique des États d'Afrique de l'Ouest
CEE	Communauté économique européenne
CFMAG	Committee for the Freedom of Mozambique, Angola and Guinea
CLSTP	Comité de Libertação de São Tomé e Prìncipe
CO	Colonial Office
CODEV	Committee on Development Cooperation
CSAD	Central and Southern Africa Department (FCO)
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy
DFID	Department for International Development
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECHO	European Community Humanitarian Office
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EDF	European Development Fund
EEAS	European External Action Service
EEC	European Economic Community
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
EUFOR	European Union Force
EURORECAMP	Renforcement des Capacités de Maintien de la Paix European Reinforcement of African Peacekeeping Capacities
FAPLA	Forças Armadas Populares de Libertação de Angola
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FLEC	Frente para a Libertação do Enclave de Cabinda
FMG	Federal Military Government (Nigeria)
FMI	Fonds monétaire international
FNLA	Frente para a Libertação de Angola
FO	Foreign Office
FRELIMO	Frente de Libertação de Moçambique
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JIC	Joint Intelligence Committee
MDG	Millenium Development Goals
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MINURCAT	Mission des Nations Unies en Rép. Centrafricaine et au Tchad
MOD	Ministry of Defence

MPLA	Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NAVFOR	[European Union] Naval Force
NEPAD	New Partnership for African Development
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
ODA	Overseas Development Administration
OPD	Committee on Defence and Overseas Policy
OTAN	Organisation du Traité de l'Atlantique Nord
OUA	Organisation de l'unité africaine
PAC	Politique agricole commune
PESD	Politique européenne de sécurité et de défense
PLP	Parliamentary Labour Party
PSDC	Politique de sécurité et de défense commune
RDC	République Démocratique du Congo
RENAMO	Resistência Nacional Moçambicana
RPF	Rwanda Patriotic Front
SADF	South African Defence Forces
SALT	Strategic Arms Limitation Talks
SEAE	Service européen pour l'action extérieure
STABEX	Système de stabilisation des exportations
SWAPO	South-West African People's Organisation
TEC	Tarif extérieur commun
UNAMIR	United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda
UNCTAD	United Nations Commission on Trade and Development
UNITA	União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola
UNSC	United Nations Security Council

Comptes Rendus

Christian AUER, Armel DUBOIS-NAYT, Nathalie DUCLOS, *Femmes, pouvoir et nation en Écosse du XVIe siècle à aujourd'hui*, Villeneuve d'Ascq : Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 2012, 152 p., ISBN 978-2-7574-0402-7, 20 €.

Le 25 août dernier, *The Economist* écrivait, dans un article intitulé « Just Say Yes », que si 51% des hommes semblaient favorable à l'indépendance en Ecosse, cette proportion tombait à 38% chez les femmes, d'où la création d'un groupe transcendant les clivages politiques, Women for Independence. On mesure là l'actualité de la corrélation entre genre et identité nationale, qui continue de poser question.

Visant à rééquilibrer le débat autour de la scotticité afin de faire bouger les lignes d'une perspective trop androcentrée, nombre d'historiennes des années 1990-2000 se sont penchées sur l'histoire des femmes en Ecosse. Ce volume à six mains, que devraient apprécier tant les spécialistes du genre que les spécialistes en Etudes écossaises, poursuit utilement ce travail visant à faire (ré)émerger le passé des Ecossaises, victimes d'une historiographie conjuguant l'utilisation du mythe et des stéréotypes pour marginaliser ces actrices de l'histoire. Enquête au long cours adoptant une perspective évolutionniste de la citoyenneté, l'ouvrage collectif propose une étude des relations genre/nation en Ecosse à partir de trois périodes charnières dans lesquelles sont respectivement ciblées trois institutions : la monarchie écossaise au XVI^{e} siècle, le Parlement britannique au tournant du XX^{e} siècle à travers la question du suffrage, et le Parlement écossais au tournant du XXI^{e} siècle. Sa bibliographie thématique permet de naviguer sans s'y perdre dans la multiplicité des sources, primaires comme secondaires, relatives aux trois pivots susmentionnés.

Non sans humour, l'introduction pose les jalons de cette histoire des femmes, « au frais dans les oubliettes du silence », de même que le cadre méthodologique adopté, qui emprunte son angle d'approche à Nira Yuval-Davis : il s'agit d'aborder la question de l'inclusion des femmes à la nation par le biais de leur participation à la *res publica*.

Le premier volet de ce triptyque enthousiasmant revient sur l'origine de l'exclusion des femmes du discours sur la nation. « Nation et gynécocratie dans l'Ecosse du XVI^{e} siècle » analyse l'évolution sémantique du terme nation et tente d'en offrir une définition. Armel Dubois-Nayt étudie ensuite les réactions à l'exercice du pouvoir royal par une femme dans les textes de deux penseurs écossais en particulier, le réformateur John Knox et l'humaniste George Buchanan, tous deux opposants à Marie Stuart, pour conclure au mépris ordinaire, dans l'Ecosse de l'époque, envers l'autorité des femmes. L'auteure rappelle que le sentiment national écossais s'articulait jusqu'à la Réforme autour de quatre piliers, que sont la couronne et l'Eglise, suivis de loin par le droit et la langue écossaise, icônes dûment mobilisées par les deux pourfendeurs de ce « monstrueux gouvernement des femmes », pour reprendre en partie le titre du pamphlet publié par Knox. Ce dernier, considérant l'exercice du pouvoir par une femme comme une transgression de l'ordre naturel et divin, y démontrait la nécessité de l'exhérédation des femmes du

pouvoir. Si d'aucun-e-s ont perçu dans ce pamphlet une diatribe visant les reines et régentes d'Europe, ou plus singulièrement d'Angleterre, l'auteure refuse de façon argumentée cette « thèse d'un Knox janiforme tenant un double discours » ; pour elle, il ne fait aucun doute que l'Ecosse était bel et bien concernée par ce libelle.

La *Rerum Scoticarum Historia* de Buchanan argumentait elle aussi en faveur de l'exclusion des femmes du pouvoir, dans le cadre d'un projet politique teinté d'un fort sentiment identitaire écossais. Contrairement à Knox, Buchanan semblait, lui, avoir la misogynie plus opportuniste mais usait également à l'encontre du beau sexe des piliers du droit et de la langue, avec une ironie certaine. L'exemple de l'utilisation faite par le latiniste de l'absence de terme pour désigner la reine/régente dans la langue écossaise, qui ne parle que de l'épouse du roi (*king's wife*), illustre à merveille cet opportunisme, que venait compléter un travail de réinterprétation de la coutume, de la Nature et de l'histoire, qui minorait par exemple les prérogatives des reines du Moyen-Age. Armel Dubois-Nayt de convoquer fort à propos, avant de conclure, l'analyse conceptuelle de Bourdieu de *travail historique de déshistoricisation* de la domination masculine.

« Les suffragettes et l'affirmation de l'identité nationale », volet central de l'ouvrage, poursuit ce remarquable travail de réflexion épistémologique en interrogeant la place des femmes dans l'historiographie écossaise, femmes confrontées à un « véritable phénomène d'amnésie historique ». Christian Auer, qui rédige ce deuxième chapitre, prend la peine de rappeler que le devoir d'objectivité qui incombe aux historien-ne-s ne saurait conduire à proposer une lecture de l'histoire à partir d'éléments hypothétiques, bien qu'il puisse être tentant de rétablir par là un équilibre. Revenant, à l'aide d'une analyse de la presse, sur la société patriarcale que constituait l'Ecosse de l'époque victorienne et sur la détermination des rôles selon le sexe, plus ou moins selon les lignes de la dichotomie privé/public, l'auteur souligne que la supériorité masculine y figurait au rang des dogmes essentiels. Le renvoi récurrent à la « nature » dans les articles de journaux de l'époque convoque encore une fois la grille de lecture proposée par Bourdieu et l'intériorisation de la domination masculine tant chez les dominants que chez les dominées.

Christian Auer aborde le cœur de son sujet par le biais de la question du mimétisme ou de l'originalité des suffragettes écossaises par rapport à leurs sœurs anglaises. L'auteur retrace les grandes étapes et stratégies de ce combat pour une citoyenneté de plein exercice et relate les tensions qui affleuraient parfois entre les branches écossaises et anglaises du mouvement. Les suffragettes écossaises revendiquaient en effet leur spécificité, bien que l'Ecosse ne connût à l'époque aucune réelle revendication nationaliste. Mues par un sentiment de double appartenance, elles mirent parfois en scène leur scotticité en ayant recours aux expédients que l'historienne Leah Leneman (référence incontournable du chapitre) nomme « stéréotypes culturels pittoresques », c'est-à-dire à la théâtralisation et à l'esthétisation. C'est ainsi qu'elles défilèrent lors de deux manifestations en présentant des tableaux vivants de grandes figures féminines historiques écossaises, affirmant leur place dans l'histoire de leur pays. Femmes de leur temps, les suffragettes écossaises n'échappaient pas à la multiplication des références au passé de la nation qui contribua durant la période victorienne au renforcement du caractère national. Lors de la radicalisation des stratégies, symboles du pouvoir, représentants des institutions furent tour à tour attaqués, qu'il s'agisse de personnes, tels le roi ou le premier ministre, ou de monuments, tels l'église de Whitekirk ou le monument en

l'honneur de William Wallace. On voit là que les suffragettes s'attaquèrent tant à des symboles britanniques qu'à des symboles de la nation écossaise, prêtes à tout pour atteindre leur objectif. S'inscrivant dans la dialectique de l'oppresseur et de la victime, ces femmes militantes utilisèrent la résistance de la nation écossaise à l'Angleterre pour en faire une symbolique de la résistance à l'oppresseur masculin, conjuguant identité féminine et identité nationale.

Troisième et dernier volet de cet ouvrage assurément instructif et intéressant, le chapitre de Nathalie Duclos s'intitule « Femmes et pouvoir politique dans l'Ecosse contemporaine ». Il s'ouvre sur le constat « effarant » de la très faible participation des femmes à la vie politique écossaise tout au long du XXe siècle, et prend le contrepoint de ces statistiques en soulignant les bons résultats du Parlement écossais en matière de représentation des femmes au début du XXI^{e} siècle. Le projet de dévolution est ainsi posé comme la pierre angulaire de ce chapitre visant à mettre en lumière le rôle joué par les féministes dans la définition d'un nouveau modèle parlementaire et de nouvelles pratiques politiques, elles qui souffraient d'un « double déficit démocratique » du fait de leur positionnement politique et de leur genre. La défense et l'adoption des principes liés au concept émergent de *new politics* témoignent selon Nathalie Duclos de l'influence des idées féministes sur le débat constitutionnel des années 1990. L'auteure synthétise les objectifs et les stratégies des féministes, sans oublier leur interpénétration avec la mouvance autonomiste. Deux priorités se dégagent, qui sont au centre d'un débat théorique dans la critique féministe : la représentation directe ou symbolique des femmes (c'est-à-dire leur présence physique) tant au niveau local qu'au niveau national d'une part, et leur représentation indirecte ou « substantive » (c'est-à-dire la promotion des intérêts des femmes – sujet d'un autre débat lié au risque d'essentialisme) d'autre part. Ces deux priorités vont de pair avec la mise en place d'une culture politique moins machiste, plus consensuelle, dont atteste notamment l'adoption d'un parlement en hémicycle, moins favorable à la confrontation que la disposition des sièges à Westminster.

Malgré les efforts déployés, les différents gouvernements écossais ont toujours compté entre un quart et un tiers de membres féminins, proportions éloignées de la parité et en deçà de la représentation des femmes au Parlement écossais. Ce constat mène l'auteure à déplorer la persistance de « domaines réservés » selon les sexes, visible notamment dans la répartition des présidences de commissions parlementaires. L'examen du respect des principes fondateurs du Parlement écossais – participation/accessibilité, partage des pouvoirs, responsabilité politique et égalité des chances (menant par exemple à l'adoption du principe de *gender mainstreaming*) –, ainsi que celui des politiques votées à Edimbourg depuis 1999 mettent en lumière la défense des « *women's issues* » par les institutions écossaises autonomes, en particulier en matière de lutte contre les violences faites aux femmes. Nathalie Duclos conclut de façon oxymorique, présentant les résultats obtenus par le Parlement écossais comme « à la fois exceptionnellement bons et partiellement décevants ».

L'évocation des initiatives mises en place depuis une dizaine d'années en Ecosse pour rendre aux femmes la place qui est la leur, tant dans le domaine des arts que celui de l'histoire, achève l'ouvrage sur une note optimiste et donne joliment le dernier mot à la poétesse Liz Lochhead, dont la revendication d'une identité plurielle, celle de femme et celle d'Ecossaise, s'expose aux yeux de tou-te-s dans le

hall du Parlement écossais : « *my language is female coloured as well as Scottish coloured* ».

Faisant le meilleur usage de la catégorie d'analyse que constitue le genre, l'ouvrage procure un nouvel éclairage à trois épisodes historiques, qui se trouvent ainsi mis en lumière de façon problématisée et se font écho à travers les cinq siècles que le livre traverse. Inscrivant pleinement les Ecossaises dans leur histoire, de façon impartiale et bien documentée, il bénéficie d'une écriture dynamique, et offre une véritable stimulation intellectuelle, reflet avantageux de l'essor des études de genre chez les anglicistes.

Université de Cergy-Pontoise, laboratoire CICC

Alexandrine GUYARD-NEDELEC

Myriam-Isabelle DUCROCQ, *Aux sources de la démocratie anglaise. De Thomas Hobbes à John Locke),* Villeneuve d'Ascq : Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 2012, 289 p., ISBN 978-2-7574-0384-6, 26 €.

Qu'est-il de commun entre la pensée politique de Thomas Hobbes, et celles de James Harrington, d'Algernon Sidney et de John Locke ? C'est ce point de convergence qu'étudie Myriam-Isabelle Ducrocq dans un ouvrage dont le titre, quelque peu réducteur, ne rend que partiellement compte de la richesse des analyses proposées. L'auteur a choisi de mettre en évidence ce qui unit ces quatre penseurs contemporains des révolutions anglaises du dix-septième siècle plutôt que ce qui les distingue, sans pour autant céder à la tentation d'un syncrétisme inopportun. Il existe assurément bien des différences entre Hobbes, chantre de l'absolutisme royal, Harrington, auteur de l'utopie républicaine *The Commonwealth of Oceana*, Sidney, qui paya de sa vie la défense d'un idéal républicain contre la monarchie absolue de Charles II, et John Locke, dont le nom reste indissolublement lié aux premiers pas de la monarchie constitutionnelle anglaise née de la Révolution Glorieuse.

Pourtant, au gré de subtiles confrontations et mises en regard, Myriam-Isabelle Ducrocq esquisse de séduisants rapprochements entre les textes de ces quatre penseurs. Hobbes, Harrington, Sidney et Locke partagent une vision semblable de l'essence du pouvoir politique, pouvoir souverain qui permet de faire face aux contingences historiques et garantit ainsi une forme de paix propice à la prospérité du corps social. À l'inverse des théoriciens de la monarchie de droit divin, Hobbes donne à sa pensée de la souveraineté absolue un fondement rationnel et, ce faisant, reconnaît quelque nécessité à tempérer ce pouvoir discrétionnaire. De leur côté, malgré leur opposition à l'absolutisme monarchique, Harrington, Sidney et Locke plaident pour une autorité souveraine qu'incarneraient les diverses instances d'une constitution mixte. C'est autour de cette notion d'autorité que se rejoignent les quatre penseurs et c'est elle qui, selon eux, légitime tout pouvoir politique et, *in fine*, tout gouvernement.

La démonstration de Myriam-Isabelle Ducrocq se décline en cinq parties, suivies d'une bibliographie étoffée et d'un index. L'auteur s'efforce dans un premier temps de retracer les fondements historiques de la conception du pouvoir politique que défendent Hobbes, Harrington, Sidney et Locke. Elle étudie le rapport de ces penseurs à l'histoire, soulignant l'influence de l'histoire ancienne et de l'humanisme civique qui se développa à la Renaissance et prônait l'imitation des Anciens, par-delà la tradition de l'augustinisme politique et son opposition radicale entre le

monde terrestre et l'univers céleste. Elle évoque également l'intérêt qu'ils portent à l'histoire récente de l'Angleterre, ébranlée, au mitan du dix-septième siècle, par deux guerres civiles et un régicide, et montre que leur pensée politique est façonnée par l'évolution des structures économiques et sociales de leur temps. Hobbes, Harrington, Sidney et Locke se font ainsi observateurs attentifs de ces mutations, dotant leur conception du pouvoir politique d'un fondement en expérience.

Se conjugue à ces observations pratiques une tentative menée par les quatre penseurs d'appréhender ce qui fonde le corps politique en raison, d'en comprendre les mécanismes et de définir les conditions de sa préservation. Cette démarche fait l'objet de la deuxième partie de l'ouvrage de Myriam-Isabelle Ducrocq. L'auteur souligne que, selon Hobbes, Harrington, Sidney et Locke, le pouvoir politique ne saurait avoir d'autre assise qu'un fondement rationnel, que vient consolider un pacte mutuel ; leur approche du pouvoir politique est fortement empreinte d'une dimension contractuelle. Elle analyse avec précision la façon dont ils articulent le passage de l'état de nature à l'état social : l'équilibre de la propriété pour Harrington et le contrat librement consenti pour les trois autres sont des actes fondateurs qui, loin des théories du droit divin des rois, établissent l'autorité du magistrat, forte du lien qu'il entretient avec le peuple et garante d'un ordre politique pérenne.

Dans une troisième partie plus brève, Myriam-Isabelle Ducrocq rappelle les modalités selon lesquelles Hobbes, Harrington, Sidney et Locke envisagent l'exercice du pouvoir politique : tandis que l'analyse hobbesienne défend le caractère un et indivisible du pouvoir souverain, les trois autres penseurs considèrent la distribution du pouvoir comme essentielle aux formes de gouvernement mixte, qui ont clairement leur faveur. Hobbes s'emploie à redéfinir la souveraineté absolue cependant que Harrington, Sidney et Locke pensent le pouvoir politique en tant que construction équilibrée permettant de protéger les libertés naturelles du peuple.

L'avant-dernière partie de l'ouvrage s'intéresse à la façon dont les quatre penseurs théorisent la préservation du corps politique contre la menace que représentent les passions viciées des hommes. Promouvant un idéal de concorde, ils entrevoient des manières différentes d'y parvenir : tandis que Hobbes et Harrington défendent l'idée d'un État stable, à l'abri des mouvements du temps, Sidney adopte une conception dynamique du pouvoir politique, doublée d'une approche pragmatique fondée sur un ajustement nécessaire à la mutabilité des choses. Préoccupés par la question de la pérennité du corps politique, les quatre penseurs évoquent l'essence du pouvoir politique en des termes semblables : même Harrington, Sidney et Locke, pourtant partisans d'un gouvernement mixte, reconnaissent au magistrat un pouvoir discrétionnaire, absolu, utilisé pour le bien commun, à l'image de la juste prérogative lockéenne. Le pouvoir, même limité, ne saurait se départir de sa pleine puissance, d'où une proximité plus grande entre les quatre penseurs qu'il y paraît de prime abord : telle est la thèse que défend Myriam-Isabelle Ducrocq dans des pages qui emportent l'adhésion.

Tout aussi convaincante est la dernière partie de l'ouvrage, dans laquelle l'auteur expose la façon dont Hobbes, Harrington, Sidney et Locke conçoivent le rapport des individus au pouvoir politique et la place que chacun d'eux accorde à l'utilisation des libertés personnelles, singulièrement quand il s'agit de désobéir à un pouvoir perçu comme illégitime : le devoir de résistance à un gouvernement usurpé ou tyrannique est-il lui-même légitime ? Le peuple peut-il seulement se faire juge ? Alors que les débats autour de la religion furent au cœur des bouleversements politiques du dix-septième siècle, Myriam-Isabelle Ducrocq met également en

lumière la manière dont Hobbes, Harrington, Sidney et Locke pensent le lien entre le politique et le religieux : que risque le pouvoir politique à promouvoir la tolérance religieuse ? Quelle relation la liberté de conscience entretient-elle avec les libertés politiques ? Autant de questions d'une urgente actualité, aujourd'hui comme au dix-septième siècle, soulevées par ces quatre penseurs et soigneusement analysées dans *Aux sources de la démocratie anglaise*.

Pourtant, l'histoire politique du dix-septième siècle est comme le parent pauvre de cet ouvrage. Outre les coquilles et les maladresses stylistiques qui émaillent le texte, le travail de Myriam-Isabelle Ducrocq pèche par une contextualisation historique lacunaire, voire fautive. Par exemple, Gerrard Winstanley n'était pas Niveleur, mais Bêcheur (« *Digger* »), et les Niveleurs en tant que groupe politique constitué ne participèrent pas à la Révolution de 1642 (p. 59), pour la simple raison que le mouvement niveleur ne se constitua qu'en 1645, l'année 1642 étant marquée par le commencement de la première guerre civile, non par une quelconque rupture révolutionnaire. Le développement consacré aux impôts prélevés par Charles I^{er} (p. 71) manque lui aussi de clarté. Mais ces imprécisions et ces raccourcis ne sont au fond que des erreurs vénielles. Plus gênante est la confusion entre les différents acteurs qui participèrent aux événements des années 1640 : il est inexact d'affirmer que « les presbytériens jouèrent un rôle considérable dans l'abolition de la monarchie et dans l'arrivée au pouvoir d'Oliver Cromwell, notamment au sein de l'armée des "têtes rondes" » (p. 234). Plus enclins au compromis que les Indépendants, les Presbytériens tentèrent de trouver un terrain d'entente avec le roi, et c'est notamment ce qui provoqua la purge du Parlement de décembre 1648. Royalistes, Presbytériens, Indépendants et membres des sectes radicales participèrent aux vifs débats théologico-politiques qui accompagnèrent les guerres civiles anglaises. Foisonnants et complexes, originaux ou forgés par l'histoire, ceux-ci constituèrent un ferment qui ne manqua pas d'inspirer les quatre auteurs dont Myriam-Isabelle Ducrocq étudie scrupuleusement la pensée. Malgré les quelques réserves exposées ici, son ouvrage sera éclairant pour tout lecteur désireux de plonger aux sources de la modernité politique.

Université de Haute Alsace, Mulhouse, EA ILLE 4363 Laurent CURELLY

Olivier ESTEVES, *De l'invisibilité à l'islamophobie, les musulmans britanniques (1945-2010)*, Paris : Presses de Sciences Po, 2011, 274 p., ISBN : 978-2-7246-1210-3, 22,50 euros.

Le livre d'Olivier Esteves est une contribution importante à l'histoire des populations musulmanes en Grande-Bretagne depuis l'après-guerre - population en plein croissance, passant de 3% à 5% de la population d'Angleterre et du pays de Galles entre 2001 et 2011 selon le recensement de 2011. Le sujet est ici définit de manière large, puisqu'Olivier Esteves propose une définition de l'islam britannique comme une identité à trois niveaux, en suivant la sociologue Pnina Werbner : celui de la « communauté morale », qui renvoie à la responsabilité envers les autres membres de la communauté, celui de la « communauté esthétique », définie par « la culture, la connaissance, la créativité », et celui de la « communauté politique » définie par la défense d'intérêts communs dans le débat public. En se proposant d'aborder de front ces trois aspects de ce que peuvent être les identités musulmanes dans la Grande-Bretagne contemporaine, Olivier Esteves se donne les moyens de

restituer toute la complexité de l'histoire de ces populations en mêlant histoire sociale, politique, culturelle et religieuse. Pour ce faire, il puise dans une gamme très large de sources, qui couvrent aussi bien l'histoire des politiques migratoires, la sociologie urbaine, les médias musulmans, que l'étude d'archives orales ou des rapports officiels sur le multiculturalisme et la cohésion sociale. Même si l'islam britannique s'est beaucoup diversifié ces dernières années avec l'arrivée de migrants du Moyen-Orient ou d'Afrique, l'auteur choisit de s'en tenir pour l'essentiel aux populations indo-pakistanaises, qui sont les populations musulmanes de loin les plus nombreuses depuis la seconde guerre mondiale, et qui ont joué un rôle prépondérant dans le développement de l'islam dans la société britannique dans les cinquante dernières années.

Le livre est construit autour de l'évolution du statut dans le débat public de ces populations, qui sont passées selon l'auteur de l'invisibilité dans les années 1950 et 1960 à « l'islamophobie » dans les quinze dernières années, après avoir été tour à tour perçues comme '*coloured*', '*black*' ou '*Asian'*, puis enfin '*Muslim'* à partir de l'affaire Rushdie en 1988-1989. Dans une première période, celle de l'arrivée des primo-arrivants dans les décennies de l'immédiat après-guerre, et dans le contexte d'un régime migratoire britannique particulièrement ouvert aux populations coloniales et post-coloniales, les hommes, typiquement d'origine pakistanaise, se sont installés dans les grands régions urbaines et industrielles. C'est le « mythe du retour », selon lesquels ces travailleurs migrants pensaient retourner au pays au bout de quelques années, ainsi que les difficultés d'adaptation à la Grande-Bretagne, qui ont fait de ces populations des communautés de travailleurs en marge du reste de la société et donc « invisibles ». A partir du *Commonwealth Immigrants Act* de 1962, la Grande-Bretagne commence à restreindre ce type d'immigration et on voit apparaître le phénomène du regroupement familial, qui accentue la tendance à la concentration résidentielle dans les zones urbaines populaires et favorise le développement de communautés immigrées urbaines. Dans les années 1970, le chômage de masse touche de plein fouet ces populations, dont la pratique de l'islam commence à devenir plus visible dans le paysage britannique avec l'apparition des premières grandes mosquées à Manchester, Birmingham et Londres notamment.

C'est dans le contexte des années 1980 que s'effectue ce que l'on peut appeler le « basculement identitaire » qui voit ces populations se muer dans le débat public de pakistanais ou *Asians* en des communautés de plus en plus définies par leur islamité. Olivier Esteves décrit cette évolution en la replaçant dans le contexte de débats sur la diversité religieuse à l'école comme les affaires Honeyford ou de Dewsbury, qui montrent à chaque fois comment des questions de concentration résidentielle et scolaire de ces populations exacerbent l'animosité des « blancs » (pour reprendre le vocabulaire usuel en Grande-Bretagne) à l'encontre de ce qu'ils perçoivent de plus en plus comme une communauté aux valeurs incompatibles avec les leurs. C'est dans ce contexte qu'éclate l'affaire Rushdie, qui en Grande-Bretagne rend tout à coup les musulmans très visibles, tout en soulignant leurs difficultés à s'organiser et à faire valoir leurs points de vue dans le débat public.

Le livre restitue avec finesse les différentes facettes des mobilisations politiques qui ont dominé depuis les années 1990 : « quête de respectabilité » à travers la création d'organisations qui se veulent représentatives, comme le très médiatique *Muslim Council of Britain* (MCB), mais aussi attirance d'une partie des musulmans, en particulier des jeunes révoltés par la première guerre du Golfe ou la guerre de Bosnie, pour un militantisme islamiste. Le fameux « Londonistan »,

auquel on réduit trop souvent de ce côté de la Manche l'islam britannique, est ici évalué à sa juste valeur, un petit milieu marginal de prêcheurs radicaux, même s'il a joué un rôle dans la dérive violente de certains jeunes britanniques musulmans.

Le livre retrace enfin l'évolution des discours publics en direction des musulmans depuis 2001, en commençant par le rejet du multiculturalisme par les gouvernements *New Labour* après les émeutes de 2001, sa substitution par le nouveau discours sur la *community cohesion* qui, en appelant à l'adhésion de tous à des valeurs communes, vise implicitement les musulmans. Dans le même temps, la stigmatisation et la discrimination envers les musulmans – couramment qualifiés « d'islamophobie » dans le contexte britannique, notamment sous l'influence d'un rapport du Runnymede Trust consacré à cette question en 1997- s'impose comme une préoccupation majeure dans le contexte post-11 septembre, à la suite du racisme anti-noir ou au '*Paki-bashing'* des décennies précédentes. Dans la Grande-Bretagne de Tony Blair et de Gordon Brown, le rejet de la diversité ethno-raciale par les populations « blanches », ou *white backlash,* prend de plus en plus la forme d'un sentiment anti-musulman, évolution qui s'accélère après les attentats de juillet 2005 et le durcissement de l'arsenal policier et judiciaire anti-terroriste. Les musulmans ont ainsi fini par se retrouver au cœur de tous les débats sur la diversité culturelle : tendance à la ségrégation qui serait encouragée par les dérives supposées des « excès du multiculturalisme », rejet des valeurs « britanniques » sous-entendu par les discours sur la cohésion sociale, suspicion de radicalisation violente pour certains, et cibles de choix des nouvelles formes de rejet de l'autre.

Ce livre vient combler une lacune en France, sur une population qui reste généralement méconnue. C'est d'autant plus le cas, comme le souligne la préface de Gérard Noiriel, que son étude est aussi riche d'enseignements pour toute personne intéressée par les questions d'immigration et de diversité religieuse en France, où l'attitude des pouvoirs publics face aux minorités est bien entendu très différente, mais ou affleurent néanmoins des tensions comparables sur « l'intégration » des musulmans et sur la place de l'islam dans l'identité nationale. Le livre permet de saisir les évolutions outre-Manche dans tout ce qu'elles ont d'intrinsèquement britanniques, en insistant bien sur les spécificités sociales, politiques et religieuses des musulmans indo-pakistanais, ainsi que sur l'originalité du contexte politico-institutionnel britannique (rôle des Eglises dans le système scolaire, existence au moment de l'affaire Rushdie d'une loi sur le blasphème ne s'appliquant pas à l'islam, tropisme religieux de Tony Blair, etc). En même temps, il révèle aussi leur dimension internationale et européenne (difficile mutations des sociétés européennes vers la diversité culturelle, évolutions des formes de racisme vers le rejet des musulmans, « guerre contre le terrorisme »). Il y parvient notamment en mêlant habilement son récit des évolutions nationales à des études locales basées sur une connaissance fine du terrain. Les belles photographies qui ornent le texte illustrent aussi efficacement les différentes facettes des identités musulmanes dans la vie quotidienne britannique.

Université Sorbonne Nouvelle-Paris 3, EA CREW 4399 Romain GARBAYE

RÉSUMÉS / ABSTRACTS

Olakunle A. LAWAL

BRITAIN, DECOLONISATION AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF NIGERIAN FOREIGN POLICY IN THE ERA OF TRANSFERS OF POWER, 1958-1960

In the aftermath of the decision to concede independence to Nigeria in 1960, Britain took steps to determine the direction which the foreign policy of the new nation should take. This was done with the ready acquiescence of Prime Minister Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa. His essentially pro-British foreign policy approach in the countdown to independence reflected the desire to continue with the colonial nexus in a post-colonial era. This paper analyses the ramifications of decolonisation in Nigeria and concludes that it was because British decision-makers wanted to keep Britain's status of 'most favoured nation' in Nigeria that they attempted to implant not only a friendly government in the country on the eve of independence, but also give a pro-British direction to the foreign policy of the new nation. However, with the reality of independence, coupled with a hostile domestic public opinion against a 'sheepish' pursuit of pro-British foreign policy, the Nigerian leadership walked on a tightrope, trying to retain the confidence of the British government whilst pursuing a seemingly independent stance on a number of diplomatic issues.

LA GRANDE-BRETAGNE, LA DÉCOLONISATION ET LA CONSTRUCTION DE LA POLITIQUE ÉTRANGÈRE NIGÉRIANE À L'ÉPOQUE DES TRANSFERTS DE POUVOIR, 1958-1960

Suite à l'accord sur l'indépendance du Nigeria en 1960, la Grande-Bretagne prit des mesures pour influencer la direction que prendrait la politique étrangère de la nouvelle nation. Ceci fut accompli avec le consentement du Premier ministre Sir Abubakar Tafew Balewa. À la veille de l'indépendance, son approche de la politique étrangère, essentiellement pro-britannique, reflétait son désir de maintenir le lien colonial dans l'ère post-coloniale. Cet article analyse les ramifications de la décolonisation au Nigeria et conclut que les Britanniques ont tenté d'implanter, à la veille de l'indépendance, un gouvernement sur lequel ils pouvaient compter et de donner une impulsion pro-britannique à la politique étrangère de la nouvelle nation, afin de préserver pour la Grande-Bretagne le statut de « nation la plus privilégiée » au Nigeria. Cependant, face à la réalité de l'indépendance, ainsi qu'à une opinion publique hostile à une politique étrangère pro-britannique timorée, les leaders nigérians se sont trouvés sur un terrain glissant, pris entre le désir de conserver la confiance du gouvernement britannique et la nécessité d'adopter une position apparemment indépendante sur un certain nombre de questions diplomatiques.

Virginie ROIRON

L'IMPACT DE LA CRISE RHODÉSIENNE SUR LES RELATIONS ENTRE LA GRANDE-BRETAGNE ET LES ÉTATS AFRICAINS DU COMMONWEALTH

La déclaration unilatérale d'indépendance du gouvernement blanc minoritaire d'Ian Smith en Rhodésie du Sud provoqua une crise sans précédent entre la Grande-Bretagne et ses anciennes colonies africaines, pour qui le sujet revêtait un caractère symbolique renvoyant à leur passé

immédiat et à leur combat contre l'inégalité raciale et le colonialisme. Le Commonwealth devint le théâtre d'un affrontement qui faillit être fatal à son existence. La crise rhodésienne posait en effet la question du sens de l'association que représentait le Commonwealth, et de la signification que chaque partie, États africains et Grande-Bretagne, donnait à leur relation post-coloniale. Surgissant à un moment crucial de l'évolution du Commonwealth et de la redéfinition de la politique étrangère britannique, la crise de Rhodésie permit à la Grande-Bretagne et aux États africains de dépasser une relation encore marquée par la référence à l'empire.

THE IMPACT OF THE RHODESIAN CRISIS ON RELATIONS BETWEEN BRITAIN AND THE AFRICAN STATES OF THE COMMONWEALTH

The Unilateral Declaration of Independence of Ian Smith's white minority government in Southern Rhodesia led to an unprecedented crisis between Britain and its former African colonies, for whom the issue was highly symbolic, linked to both their immediate past and their struggle against racial inequality and colonialism. The Commonwealth became the scene of a confrontation which almost led to its termination. The Rhodesian crisis raised the question of the meaning of the Commonwealth association, and the significance that each party, the African states and Britain, gave to post-colonial relations. The crisis, which occurred during a crucial period of Commonwealth evolution and redefinition of British foreign policy, enabled Britain and the African states to forge relations beyond the reference to empire.

Gary BLANK

BRITAIN, BIAFRA AND THE BALANCE OF PAYMENTS: THE FORMATION OF LONDON'S 'ONE NIGERIA' POLICY

Harold Wilson's Labour government played an instrumental and highly controversial role in the Nigerian Civil War (1967-70). Unlike the United States and many European countries, Britain strongly supported a 'One Nigeria' policy and furnished the federalist regime in Lagos with extensive armaments and other military supplies. Nevertheless, historians of British foreign policy have largely ignored the factors underlying this intense involvement. Based on British archives, this article examines British decision-making between January 1966 and the winter of 1968. It confirms that economic concerns were paramount, but argues that their influence was much more complex and contradictory than has been acknowledged. Biafra's declaration of secession on 30 May 1967 posed a concrete dilemma: to support Nigerian unity, preserving a large common market; or to favour Biafra, and therefore maintain access to the bulk of Shell-BP's oil investments. This dilemma fostered recurring disputes within the British government and civil service, resulting in an ambivalent attitude towards Nigerian unity. Consensus on a policy of 'One Nigeria' and extensive arms sales only came in late 1967, when the Biafrans were deemed to be 'implacably hostile' to Britain's future oil interests.

LA GRANDE-BRETAGNE, LE BIAFRA ET LA BALANCE DES PAIEMENTS : LA GENÈSE DE LA POLITIQUE DU « ONE NIGERIA » DE LONDRES

Le gouvernement travailliste d'Harold Wilson joua un rôle déterminant et hautement controversé dans la guerre civile nigériane (1967-70). Contrairement aux États-Unis et à plusieurs pays européens, la Grande-Bretagne apporta un soutien puissant à la politique du « One Nigeria » et fournit au régime fédéral à Lagos de nombreuses armes et du matériel militaire. Pourtant, les historiens spécialistes de politique étrangère britannique se sont fort peu intéressés aux raisons pour lesquelles l'implication britannique fut aussi intense. À partir

des archives britanniques, cet article examine les prises de décision britanniques entre janvier 1966 et l'hiver 1968. Il confirme que les intérêts économiques jouèrent un rôle de premier plan, mais conclut que leur influence fut beaucoup plus complexe et contradictoire que l'historiographie ne l'a pour l'instant reconnu. La déclaration de sécession du Biafra le 30 mai 1967 mit le gouvernement britannique face à un dilemme : soutenir l'unité du Nigeria, préservant ainsi un large marché commun; ou favoriser le Biafra, et maintenir ainsi l'accès à la majeure partie des investissements pétroliers de Shell-BP. Ce dilemme suscita des querelles récurrentes au sein du gouvernement et de la haute fonction publique britanniques, menant à une attitude ambivalente sur la question de l'unité nigériane. Ce n'est qu'à la fin de l'année 1967, lorsque les Biafrais furent jugés « implacablement hostiles » à l'avenir des intérêts pétroliers britanniques, qu'un consensus émergea en faveur de la politique du « One Nigeria » et de la vente massive d'armes..

Guia MIGANI

LA GRANDE-BRETAGNE, LES PAYS ACP ET LES NÉGOCIATIONS POUR LA CONVENTION DE LOMÉ, 1973-1975

La Convention de Lomé de 1975, qui renouvela profondément la politique de coopération communautaire, fut le résultat de négociations longues et difficiles entre les pays ACP (Afrique, Caraïbes et Pacifique) et les pays européens, mais aussi entre les membres de la CEE. Lors de l'adhésion britannique, il avait été décidé de proposer à un certain nombre de pays du Commonwealth, et notamment aux pays africains, de participer aux négociations pour le renouvellement de la Convention de Yaoundé, grâce à laquelle les États africains associés bénéficiaient du Fonds européen de développement et de conditions d'accès au Marché commun européen particulièrement favorables. Cette offre suscita beaucoup de méfiance parmi les pays du Commonwealth, pour qui les accords de Yaoundé étaient une marque de néocolonialisme. Londres fut ainsi placée dans une position difficile. Ces négociations l'obligèrent à redéfinir ses priorités, non seulement par rapport à l'Afrique, mais aussi vis-à-vis des autres pays en développement. Si les dirigeants britanniques insistèrent pour que les pays « associables » du Commonwealth adhèrent à la nouvelle Convention, ils négocièrent également pour que la CEE n'adopte pas une politique de développement trop discriminatoire à l'égard des pays tiers.

BRITAIN, THE ACP COUNTRIES AND NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE LOMÉ CONVENTION, 1973-1975

The Lomé Convention of 1975, which renewed the cooperation policy of the EEC, was the outcome of long and difficult negotiations between the ACP (African, Caribbean and Pacific) countries and the European states, but also among the EEC members themselves. In the early 1970s, during the negotiations for British membership, it was decided that negotiations for the renewal of the Yaoundé Convention, which gave associated countries access to the European Development Fund and preferential trade with the Common Market, should be open to some Commonwealth developing countries (particularly in Africa). This was not welcomed by Commonwealth countries, which saw the Yaoundé Convention as a neo-colonial agreement. London thus found itself in a difficult position. The negotiations forced the British to rethink their priorities towards the African countries and the developing world. London wanted the 'associable' members of the Commonwealth to take part in the new Convention, and simultaneously drove negotiations in favour of a European development policy which would not discriminate against third-party countries.

Pedro Aires OLIVEIRA

THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE INDEPENDENCE OF PORTUGUESE AFRICA (1974-1976): STAKES, PERCEPTIONS AND POLICY OPTIONS

During the colonial wars fought by Portugal in Africa (1961-74), the United Kingdom pursued a policy of non-commitment vis-à-vis the authoritarian governments in Lisbon and had almost no formal contacts with the liberation movements in Guinea-Bissau, Angola and Mozambique. When the *Estado Novo* regime was finally overthrown in 1974, Whitehall was relatively ill-informed on the ideology, organization and leaders of the parties which seemed poised to take over the administration of those territories. Drawing on recently released material, this article investigates the contrast between the way the two Marxist-inspired liberation movements of Angola and Mozambique were perceived by British diplomats and decision-makers. While the Wilson government made a positive assessment of the prospects of a FRELIMO-dominated Mozambique, taking quick steps to establish a friendly relationship with Samora Machel's movement, it displayed a much cooler attitude vis-à-vis the MPLA, and made significant overtures towards one of its main rivals, UNITA. This article focuses on British assessments of the leadership abilities of the main groups vying for power in Angola and Mozambique, the implications of the situation in the two territories for the evolution of other Southern African conflicts and the influence of the Cold War in British strategic thinking.

LE ROYAUME-UNI ET L'INDÉPENDANCE DE L'AFRIQUE PORTUGAISE (1974-1976) : ENJEUX, PERCEPTIONS ET OPTIONS POLITIQUES

*Le Royaume-Uni, qui suivit une politique de non-engagement pendant les guerres coloniales menées par le Portugal en Afrique (1961-1974), n'eut presque aucun contact officiel avec les mouvements de libération en Guinée Bissau, en Angola et au Mozambique. Lorsque le régime de l'*Estado Novo *fut renversé en 1974, Whitehall n'avait que très peu d'information sur l'idéologie, l'organisation et les chefs des partis qui semblaient sur le point de prendre le contrôle de l'administration de ces territoires. À partir d'archives récemment ouvertes, cet article compare la manière dont les diplomates et décideurs britanniques ont perçu les deux mouvements de libération marxistes en Angola et au Mozambique. Si le gouvernement Wilson accueillit favorablement la perspective d'un Mozambique dominé par le FRELIMO et prit rapidement des mesures pour établir des relations cordiales avec le mouvement de Samora Machel, il manifesta une attitude beaucoup plus froide à l'égard du MPLA et entreprit même un dialogue avec l'un de ses principaux rivaux, l'UNITA. Cet article s'intéresse à la manière dont les Britanniques ont évalué les capacités des dirigeants des principaux groupes qui luttaient pour le pouvoir en Angola et au Mozambique, aux implications de la situation dans les deux territoires pour l'évolution des autres conflits en Afrique australe, et à l'influence de la Guerre froide sur la réflexion britannique en matière de stratégie.*

Dean WHITE

THE RWANDAN GENOCIDE OF 1994: A COMPARISON OF WHY THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE UNITED STATES DID NOT INTERVENE

This paper explores the policies of the United Kingdom and the United States in relation to the Rwandan genocide, a subject that has received relatively little academic attention to date. The author presents here one of the few studies of the British response to the crisis of 1994 and seeks to demonstrate why the United Kingdom and the United States responded (or indeed failed to respond) to the crisis in the way that they did. He therefore investigates whether the United Kingdom had a policy towards Rwanda independent from that of the

United States. The article concludes that much of the existing literature over-simplifies the British response, shows that the United Kingdom and the United States responded in quite different ways and argues that this was largely due to the United Kingdom's desire to support French involvement in Rwanda.

LE GÉNOCIDE RWANDAIS DE 1994 : UNE COMPARAISON DES RAISONS POUR LESQUELLES LE ROYAUME-UNI ET LES ÉTATS-UNIS NE SONT PAS INTERVENUS

Cet article analyse les politiques britannique et américaine face au génocide rwandais, sujet qui a reçu relativement peu d'attention de la part des universitaires jusqu'à présent. L'auteur présente ici une des rares études consacrées à la réponse britannique face à la crise de 1994 et cherche à démontrer les motivations et ressorts des réponses (ou des non-réponses) du Royaume-Uni et des États-Unis. Il s'interroge ainsi sur l'indépendance de la politique menée par les Britanniques au Rwanda vis-à-vis des États-Unis. Les conclusions généralement proposées simplifient la réponse britannique et cet article propose ainsi une réévaluation de la recherche existante : le Royaume-Uni a réagi de façon fort différente des États-Unis car l'objectif britannique était de soutenir les actions françaises au Rwanda.

Gordon D. CUMMING

THE UNITED KINGDOM OVER THE LOMÉ YEARS: A CONSTRUCTIVE PARTNER IN EUROPE?

Soon after joining the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1973, the United Kingdom was regarded as 'an awkward partner'. The British felt aggrieved that their voices were not being heard across a range of issues, including European development assistance. How justified were the British in harbouring such grievances? Did the United Kingdom simply have to fall into line with the demands of its European aid partners or did it enjoy discreet but discernible influence over EEC assistance? This question of reciprocal influence has not been addressed in the literature and yet it is pivotal to understanding why the United Kingdom has retained a reputation for awkwardness on some European issues and not others. It is central to this article which begins by showing how British aid was broadly receptive to European Commission influence over the Lomé years. Next, it evaluates British influence on European assistance over three periods: 1973-1979 (Lomé I and the preceding negotiations), 1980-89 (Lomé II and Lomé III) and 1990-1999 (Lomé IV). Drawing on interviews with the Commission and Overseas Development Administration, this study then highlights the factors which enabled and constrained British influence. It concludes by suggesting that the United Kingdom's awkwardness in Europe cannot be traced back to its early, constructive involvement in European aid.

LE ROYAUME-UNI PENDANT LES ANNÉES LOMÉ : UN PARTENAIRE CONSTRUCTIF EN EUROPE ?

Peu après son entrée dans la Communauté économique européenne (CEE) en 1973, le Royaume-Uni a été perçu comme un « partenaire difficile ». Les Britanniques étaient mécontents de leur manque d'ascendant sur un certain nombre de questions, y compris l'aide européenne au développement. Mais dans quelle mesure ces rancunes du Royaume-Uni sont-elles fondées ? Le Royaume-Uni n'a-t-il eu d'autre choix que de se plier aux exigences de ses partenaires européens ou a-t-il pu exercer une influence discrète mais réelle sur les programmes d'aide européens ? Cette question d'influence mutuelle n'est pas abordée dans les études sur le sujet. Pourtant, elle est essentielle car elle éclaire les raisons pour lesquelles le Royaume-Uni demeure perçu comme un partenaire difficile sur certaines questions

européennes. Elle est au cœur du présent article, qui démontre dans sa première partie que le Royaume Uni était plutôt réceptif à l'influence exercée par la Commission européenne sur la politique britannique d'aide lors des Conventions de Lomé. L'influence des Britanniques sur l'aide européenne est ensuite évaluée en distinguant trois périodes : 1973-1979 (Lomé I et les négociations qui ont précédé), 1980-1989 (Lomé II et III) et 1990-2000 (Lomé IV). Fondé sur des entretiens auprès de la Commission européenne et de l'Administration britannique du développement Outre-mer, cet article examine par la suite les facteurs qui ont favorisé ou limité l'influence britannique. Il conclut enfin que le caractère récalcitrant dont le Royaume-Uni a souvent fait preuve en Europe ne peut pas être imputable au bilan de ses premières années de participation à la politique européenne d'aide.

Tony CHAFER & Gordon D. CUMMING

BRITAIN AND AFRICA: THE SEARCH FOR NEW FORMS OF ENGAGEMENT

Franco-British relations in Africa were marked by deep-seated rivalry during the colonial and post-colonial era. The pledge by the British and French governments to set aside past rivalry and 'harmonise their policies towards Africa' at the 1998 Franco-British summit in Saint-Malo thus represented a significant new development in British Africa policy and served as the catalyst for the development of closer formal and informal ties between policy-making elites in the two foreign policy establishments. It is this bilateral cooperation that is the main focus of this article. However, in order to show how and why Britain has recently grafted on to its traditional unilateral approach to Africa a joint or 'bilateral' mode of intervention, this article begins by outlining Britain's unilateral and multilateral approaches to Africa over the colonial and post-colonial eras. It then sets out the driving forces behind Britain's decision to add bilateral approaches to its existing armoury for tackling the challenges of Africa, specifically poverty reduction, democratic deficits and chronic insecurity. Next, it explores the institutional and policy changes that the Saint Malo declaration has entailed. Finally, it sets out the constraints on Britain's 'partnership' with France and future prospects for the partnership. The shifting forms of British engagement in Africa over the *longue durée* have attracted scant attention in the literature, with most studies focusing on British Africa policy in the post-Cold War years, particularly under recent Labour governments (1997-2010). This article shows how, and why, Britain has grafted onto its traditional approaches a joint or 'bilateral' mode of intervention.

LA GRANDE-BRETAGNE ET L'AFRIQUE : À LA RECHERCHE DE NOUVELLES FORMES D'ENGAGEMENT

Les relations franco-britanniques en Afrique pendant les périodes coloniale et post-coloniale ont été caractérisées par la rivalité. La promesse des gouvernements britannique et français, lors du sommet franco-britannique de Saint-Malo en 1998, de « mettre de côté » leur rivalité traditionnelle et d' « harmoniser leurs politiques africaines » a donc marqué un moment important dans l'évolution de la politique africaine britannique et a été le catalyseur pour l'établissement de relations officielles et officieuses entre les responsables de la politique africaine dans les deux pays. Cette coopération « bilatérale » est au cœur de cet article. Cependant, afin de montrer comment et pourquoi la Grande-Bretagne a ajouté cette approche bilatérale à ses approches traditionnelles unilatérale et multilatérale, des problèmes africains, cet article décrit les approches unilatérales et multilatérales de la politique africaine britannique pendant la période coloniale et post-coloniale. Les auteurs expliquent ensuite les ressorts de cette nouvelle approche, s'attachant en particulier à la réduction de la pauvreté, à la promotion de la démocratie et à la lutte contre l'insécurité, avant d'aborder les changements politiques et institutionnels que cette nouvelle approche a provoqués. Enfin, il présente les contraintes qui pèsent sur ce partenariat avec la France et

ses perspectives d'avenir. Les formes changeantes de l'engagement britannique avec l'Afrique sur la longue durée n'ont pas attiré l'attention des analystes, qui, pour la plupart, ont préféré traiter de la politique africaine britannique pendant la période post-Guerre froide, et notamment de la politique africaine des gouvernements travaillistes (1997-2010). Cet article montre comment et pourquoi la Grande-Bretagne a ajouté ce mode d'intervention bilatérale à ses approches traditionnelles.

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